ARTLESS TALES;

OR,

ROMANTIC EFFUSIONS

OF

THE HEART.

BY

ANNA MARIA PORTER.

" The generous courſer does not ſo exult
" To toſs his floating mane againſt the wind,
" And neigh amidſt the thunder of the war,
" As virtue to oppoſe her ſwelling breaſt,
" Like a firm ſhield againſt the darts of fate."

MISS AIKIN.

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PREFACE.

IN compliance with the wiſhes of ſeveral friends, I offer a ſecond collection of ſtories to the world, which being of the ſame ſpecies with thoſe of my firſt publication, I have choſen the ſame title for them.

I truſt that the many faults which will be diſcovered in theſe tales, will be looked on with an indulgent eye, when it is conſidered, that I have but juſt completed my ſixteenth year.

ANNA MARIA PORTER.

London,
December, 1794.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

Elinor, or the Errors of Education..... 5

Deluſions of the Heart. 52

Tour to the Lakes; or the Miſeries of Diſ-

obedience.....30

ARTLESS TALES.

ELINOR.

Madneſs! confuſion! let the ſtorm come on,
Let the tumultuous roar drive all upon me,
Daſh my devoted bark; ye ſurges, break it!
'Tis for my ruin that the tempeſt riſes.
When I am loſt, ſunk to the bottom low,
Peace ſhall return, and all be calm again. ROWE.

SIR JAMES and Lady Thorald, had ſparkled in the brighteſt circles of the *Beaumonde*, and during the courſe of eighteen years ſplendid parade, they found it *was* poſſible to diſſipate that fortune, they once imagined, too vaſt to be exhauſted. They ſaw themſelves all at once reduced from *ten*, to *one* thouſand a year; and having prudently ſold many eſtates to enable them to ſatisfy their creditors, they retired to an old family manſion, that ſtood upon their remaining lands in *Kent*, where they endeavoured by prudent, and economical ſchemes, to ſecure a decent fortune for their only child, who was now entered into her ſeventeenth year, and quitted with regret thoſe brilliant ſcenes, which had always poſſeſſed too many charms for her. *Elinor*, was born with a lofty ſoul, capable of the nobleſt exertions, but by the force of a wrong education, its virtues were perverted into foibles: Emulation, that properly directed, would have been the means of forwarding the improvement of her

mind, was confined to the ardour of being ſtyled the lovelieſt, the moſt accompliſhed, and the greateſt of women: She ſickened at the charms of a new beauty; or the power and riches of a well married rival: In the faſhionable world ſhe was ever ſurrounded by a crowd of admirers, whoſe *coronets* and *wealth*, dazzled her eyes, and held her in ſuſpence untill ſome higher title than any that had yet offered, might preſent itſelf, and raiſe her to that dignity ſhe ſo much ſighed for: yet with theſe failings in her character, ſhe was generous to an exceſs; the tale of miſery ever drew tears from her ſympathizing eyes, and not content with the bare ſymbol of pity; ſhe gave it force by her actions, and relieved, (if in the power of relief) the unfortunate petitioners: though her ambition of being greater than her acquaintance, often degenerated into envy, yet the native purity of her ſoul, prevented her from meanly traducing thoſe characters which ſhe diſliked; ſhe neither *told*, nor *liſtened*, to the tale of ſlander, but if it *would* obtrude upon her ear, ſhe defended the injured party with all the powers of eloquence: ſhe was affectionate, and dutiful to her parents; mild and complacent to her ſervants, yet pride gained the aſcendency over all her virtues; ſhe was thoughtleſs, credulous to a fault, and apt to fire at the leaſt appearance of a ſlight: ſhe was inexorable in her reſentments. Alas! To this unhappy diſpoſition, ſhe owed all the ſorrows of her life, which had it been repreſſed in her youth, would have

have left room for every generous virtue to ſpread and flouriſh; but by the aſſiduous culture of a miſtaken mother, thoſe weeds were cheriſhed, until they burſt forth in all their ripeneſs: with ſuch a temper as this, it would be needleſs to expatiate on the many tears which ſhe ſhed, tears of deſpairing greatneſs, on giving up all hopes of ſhining in her beloved circle; ſecluded in a gloomy manſion, with little fortune to look forward to, (as the beſt half, was by law obliged to go to a relation, at the demiſe of *Sir James*) how ſhould ſhe ever expect, that a title of ſufficient conſequence would penetrate the obſcurity of her abode, and regardleſs of fortune, draw her forth into that ſplendor ſhe ſo lately left. In ſuch a frame of mind, her days would have loitered on in horrid ſatiety, had not books, to which ſhe once was attached, ſoothed her ſoul, and reſtored to her boſom, ſome portion of that tranquillity ſhe had ſo long been a ſtranger to: her brothers *Tutor*, (a brother then dead) had inſtilled into *her* a love of literature; and while he remained in the family (which was until her thirteenth year) he beheld her mind expanding into all the beauty of perfection; her taſte was refined, her judgment ſolid, and her aſſiduity exceſſive; the beſt claſſical authors of her own country; France and Italy, ſhe read in their own languages, but the Grecian and the Roman, ſhe only peruſed by tranſlations; for, through all the apparent trifling of her volatile diſpoſition by a judicious choice of books, ſhe poſſeſſed a

head ſtored with knowledge, in this retirement ſhe preſerved all thoſe proudly emulative ſentiments which had corroded her breaſt in higher life, her *mother*, unconſcious of the miſchief ſhe was doing, cheriſhed all the ideas of greatneſs and ſuperiority, which were likely to inincline her to overlook all comfortable matches, and make her aſpire to a rank, which in their degraded ſituation ſhe could never expect. A county town being near their ſeat of *Thoraldſcombe*, gave them hopes that chance or intention, might lead to the feet of *Elinor*, ſome of thoſe admirers, who in the days of her proſperity ſhe had treated with contempt: a *Duke* had once been the ſummit of her ambition, an *Earl* was now the ſtandard to which ſhe reduced it. One dreary year had rolled over the heads of *Lady* and *Miſs Thorald*, when an accident happened that led to all the incidents of her chequered life. *Sir James* left *Thoraldſcombe* in the middle of a gloomy *November* day, to pay a viſit on horſeback to a gentleman who reſided at a ſeat ſome miles from his own: the night advanced without his appearing, the clock ſtruck eleven, while *Elinor* and her *mother* were anxiouſly expecting his arrival; it ſtruck terror to their hearts; ſuch a night as this, and no attendant but one, terrified them with fears for his life: robbers, pits, and a thouſand dreadful ideas crowded into their imaginations: they had already given orders for a man to be diſpatched in queſt of his maſter, when the object of all their terrors rode up the avenue, and alighting from

from his horſe, calmed the perturbed fancies of his wife and daughter by an affectionate embrace: he was eagerly aſked for reaſons to juſtify ſo terrifying a delay, and as no accident appeared to have befallen him, was tenderly chidden for his cruelty in making them wait ſo long in fear for his ſafety.—"My love," ſaid *Sir James*, addreſſing himſelf to his wife, "I "ſhould never have given occaſion for this juſt "rebuke, had it not been for my meeting with "a couple of travellers; I left *Mr. Miller's* "before eight o'clock, expecting to be at home "in two hours, as I had promiſed at leaving "you: at that time of night I had nothing to "fear, but there being no moon, my ſervant "carried a *lanthorn*; when that we were within "a mile of the town, we overtook a couple of "gentlemen who were riding very faſt, one of "them being mounted upon a very ſpirited "horſe, it took fright at our light, and threw "its rider from his back with violence upon "the road; ſeeing this I made up to him with "haſte, and alighting, with the aſſiſtance of "his companion and my ſervant, brought him "from a ſwoon, occaſioned by a contuſion in "his head, the blow rendered him ſpeechleſs "for ſome moments, and finding he was dangerouſly hurt, we conveyed him in our arms "to C——y, which you know, is three miles "nearer than my own houſe, and procuring a "chamber in one of the Inns, I ſent for a ſurgeon, and leaving him under his care and his "companions, I left them overpowered with

" their gratitude ; the gentleman who is safe, " told me that he would do himself the pleasure " of waiting upon me to-morrow, to inform " me of the health of his friend, and to thank " me for the assistance, I so humanely afforded : " do not think that I am ostentatious *Elinor*, " (said *Sir James*, observing her speaking eye, " fixed upon his with an arch expression) I only " *repeat* the compliments that were *made* to " me."—His daughter excused herself, from any intention to offend him, and supper being brought upon table, they concluded the night with conjectures about who they were and whether it were probable he should recover ; *Lady Thorald* having extorted a description of the strangers from her husband, one, she fancied to be some man of great distinction, but the *wounded* gentleman, she absolutely named the young *Duke of S*——: however ridiculous the conceptions of *Lady Thorald* might appear, they met with a favourable reception from her daughter, whose heart dilated with dawning hope, was all complacence and goodnature. When supper was finished, the lateness of the hour reminded them of repose, and every branch of the family retired to their apartments ruminating on the adventures and indulging in reveries, which from the pleasure it afforded to *Elinor*, inspired her with the following

SONNET:

'To rear the airy fabrics of wild thought,
To soar with fancy on her falcon wing,
How sweet! such moments are with rapture fraught,
When from her seat, stern reasons power we fling!

In

In hours like theſe, the maid without a grace,
Glows with the fluſh of Venus richeſt bloom.
Friends ſever'd, fly thro' all the oppoſing ſpace;
Nay, claſp the object in the dreary tomb.
Low worth neglected, mounts among the great,
Whoſe hidden beauty meets ſome piercing eye,
That plants her ſtar amid a vaſter ſky,
(Thoſe flatter now, who ſcorn'd her fallen ſtate,)
Sees in her Lord, each manly grace have part;
Sweet dreams! which float upon my melting heart.

The morning awakened her to the pleaſing toil of adorning herſelf for conqueſt, her charms were more ſuited to the ſimple raiment of a diſhabille than the gorgeous finery of a midnight ball; *Elinor* knew well, that

——————" Lovelineſs
" Needs not the foreign aid of ornament;
" But is, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the moſt;"

therefore ſhading her lovely form in a light muſlin robe, and permitting her golden hair to flow around her waiſt in all its beautiful redundancy, only covered by a turban in the Turkiſh faſhion; ſhe appeared with a beating heart, her cheeks glowing with expectation, and her large dark eyes ſwimming in fluid radiance. *Lady Thorald* did not fail to expatiate upon the celeſtial form of her child, and though *Sir James* checked her tranſports with a ſeeming frown, the expreſſion of his fond eye belied his tongue.

Breakfaſt over, *Elinor*, whoſe heart was too agitated to permit her to work, took up a volume of Poems, and attempted to read, but in vain, her wandering thoughts were buſily molding a figure for the expected ſtranger, ſhe threw it down, and ſeating herſelf at her *Piano*, endea-

endeavoured to ſettle her thoughts to it. While ſhe was engaged in the midſt of a melancholy air, that inſinuating a pleaſing ſadneſs into her mind filled her eye with a languiſhing moiſture, the door opened and a ſervant announced *Mr. Lloyd*, *Sir James* ſhook him by the hand, and introducing his wife, advanced to *Elinor*, who roſe haſtily from her ſeat, her whole face and neck burniſhed by the rich tint of beautiful confuſion; ſhe made a profound curtſey, which he returned by a graceful bow.

Mr. Lloyd was the moſt captivating of men, his figure was elegantly athletic, dignified by height, and lovely from the ſymetry with which it was formed, his face, if conſidered by the ſtricteſt rules of the ſculpture's art, was ſhaped to all their harmony, his complexion was tranſparent, with a tint of brown, that added to the warm glow of health, which ſuffuſed in ſoftening ſhades his cheek; his eyes were large, black and languiſhing, but brilliant and capable of expreſſing by one glance, every ſentiment of his ſoul; his mouth was liquid vermillion, and his teeth flakes of ſnow, but his voice was all melody, all ſweetneſs! every period ſeemed tuned by the fingers of the Muſes, and every ſentence framed by the god of eloquence himſelf.

As is the murmuring melody of ſtreams,
That in the ſtillneſs of ſome lunar night
Pour their romantic waves amid the ſhades,
In diſtant moans; ſweet as the lulling
Of the liquid lute in Lydian breathing,
His honied accents ſink upon the heart;

As

As the ſoft patt'ring of the ſtealing ſhower,
When in the vernal month it gently falls
In nectar'd richneſs on the ſilken flower.

Elinor, as ſhe gazed, as ſhe liſtened, felt new ſenſations riſe in her breaſt, ambition was huſhed within it, and a new power appeared to have uſurped his ancient reign.

Mr. Lloyd returned *Sir James* his moſt fervent acknowledgements for the aſſiſtance which he had afforded him, in the perſon of his friend: "I left my dear *Harrington* (ſaid he) in a ſweet "ſlumber, and the ſurgeon makes me happy "by informing me, that the contuſion in his "head is not dangerous, but that it moſt likely will confine him to his chamber for ſome "length of time."

Sir James after expreſſing his pleaſure at this relation, intimated his ſurprize that two gentlemen of their figure ſhould travel unattended, and at that hour of night. *Mr. Lloyd*, with a charming frankneſs, inſtantly ſatisfied his curioſity by informing him that *Sir Edward Harrington's aunt*, who lived at *Dover*, being at the point of death, had ſent to deſire his attendance in her laſt moments, and that her diſtreſſed *nephew*, without waiting for any attendants, left *London* in company with *Mr. Lloyd*, (being on their way to *Dover* when the unfortunate accident happened which introduced them to the family of the *Thoralds*).

Sir James earneſtly entreated the favour of *Mr. Lloyd's* company to dinner, and *Lady Thorald* having alſo ſolicited in vain, her daughter

daughter was ordered to uſe her influence; "Are we then to regret the pleaſure of your "preſence to day, Sir?" Aſked *Elinor*, in a timid voice: "*I* muſt be forced to regret it;" anſwered *Mr. Lloyd*, with the moſt enamoured expreſſion of his fine eyes; "friendſhip claims "my attendance, and we ought to ſacrifice "every ſelfiſh delight, as much to a *friend* as "to a *miſtreſs*:" *Elinor* bluſhed, and was ſilent. *Mr. Lloyd* bowing gracefully to all around, left the room, with a promiſe that as ſoon as his friend was able to be moved in a carriage, he would pay a ſecond viſit to *Thoraldſcombe*.

Sir James hinted his intention of inviting them both to his houſe, there to ſtay until *Sir Edward* was ſufficiently recovered to purſue his journey—a journey, which they both concluded would be then unneceſſary.

Sir James frequently rode to *C———y*, anxiouſly anticipating the recovery of *Sir Edward*, who had received a letter, telling him of the death of his relation, and the ſurgeon giving hopes that he might be able to leave his confinement in ten days, every thing was ordered to be got in readineſs for the reception of the friends at *Thoraldſcombe*.

On the evening of the tenth day, *Sir Edward* and his companion, left the inn, at the importunity of *Sir James*, and were conveyed in his carriage to the manſion. *Mr. Lloyd* introduced his friend with an eaſy elegance of manner to *Lady* and *Miſs Thorald*, who were well prepared to receive him, with that hoſpitality, which

which marked the character of *Sir James*. *Sir Edward Harrington*, was by no means ſo handſome as his friend; but his countenance was expreſſive, his figure pleaſing, and his behaviour peculiarly elegant; he appeared ſtruck with the charms of *Elinor*, but in a manner, that told his heart was engaged elſewhere. *Lady Thorald* who was already planning a match for her beloved child with one of them, (for a long ſecluſion from the world had humbled her lofty views) endeavoured by all her artful ways to pump out of her viſitors, whether *Mr. Lloyd* was heir to a title; after canvaſſing every different mode of bringing it about, ſhe at laſt hit upon an expedient, which by its ſucceſs, merited the confidence ſhe placed upon it. "You were mentioning *Wales*," ſaid ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to *Harrington*, "has "*Mr. Lloyd* an eſtate there?" "No, he has "not," returned *Sir Edward*, "but his father "*Lord Caernarvon*, has a very beautiful one to "which he will one day be heir." That was enough for *Lady Thorald*, ſhe bridled up and caſt a fond glance upon her daughter, whoſe everblooming cheek was now flu[illegible]hed with a deeper hue of pleaſure. The ſubject of this converſation was inattentive to all that had paſſed, his meaning eyes being rivetted to the downcaſt face of *Miſs Thorald*, but obſerving her complexion take a brighter vermillion, he caught the laſt words of *Sir Edward* and the glance from the eye of *Lady Thorald*, he felt an inſtantaneous emotion, as if his heart had been relieved

relieved from a load of ſorrow; it beat quick, and light in his boſom, to the whiſpers of love and hope; pleaſed with the ſenſation, he indulged the pleaſure he felt in gazing upon *Elinor*, and the rapture ſhe inſpired, when diſcourſing upon any topic, whether of literature or the great world.

Harrington and *Lloyd*, had been reſidents at *Thoraldſcombe* for a whole fortnight, when *Sir Edward* at laſt broke through the bonds of politeneſs, and almoſt by force left the manſion for *London*; where, *Mr. Lloyd* ſaid, he expected to be made happy with the hand of a lady of beauty and diſtinction. This was a ſufficient apology for *Sir Edward*, but as he had none to give for *his* departure, he was prevailed upon to ſpend the ſhooting ſeaſon with his newly acquired friends.

A few days after *Harrington* was gone, *Elinor*, who was left alone at her needle, *Mr. Lloyd* being out, ſhe ſuppoſed with her father, and *Lady Thorald* engaged in diſcourſe with a neighbour, ſhe caſt down the muſlin from her hand, and taking her lute wandered into the park. It was the firſt real temperate day that they had experienced in the whole month, the ſky was ſerene, and the ſun ſhining in full power, freed the air from the freezing cold which had fettered it at the dawn of day; his force was ſo exceſſive, that it obliged *Elinor* to ſeek ſhelter beneath a clump of holly, that formed with their thick branches a rude ſort of grove; here ſhe found a moment for breath, and taking up her

her lute which hung on her arm, tuned it with the fingers of harmony, and accompanied its melting tones, by warbling the following ſong of her own compoſition.

Ah! could my words be borne along,
The ſtream of air, to Richard's ear;
Could echo, but theſe notes prolong,
And every accent, Richard hear.

Then would he know, how much I love;
Sweet paſſion! that ſhall never ceaſe!
Then ſure, he'd ſeek this ruſtic grove,
And ſooth me, with one look to peace.

She pauſed, and heaving a deep-drawn ſigh, cloſed her hands, and appeared ſinking into a profound reverie, when the ſtep of ſome one near, rouſed her ſlumbering attention; caſting up her dark eyes with hurried expreſſion, ſhe met the eager gaze of him ſhe had been celebrating; ſhe roſe haſtily, *Mr. Lloyd* gently forced her back, upon the little riſe which ſhe had quitted, and in a ſweet accent, begged ſhe would favour him with that ſeducing ſtrain again. *Elinor* conſcious of the wiſh ſhe had expreſſed in it, now burned with confuſion, on finding ſhe had been overheard; ſhe ſtammered out a denial with ſuch apparent emotion, that *Mr. Lloyd* fixing his penetrating eye upon her face with a melancholy agitation, uttered in a faultering voice—"The lovely confuſion you "are in at preſent *Miſs Thorald*, would almoſt "lead me to ſuppoſe *you* the poetreſs to whom "the words belong, and that *fiction alone* did "not guide your pen."

Elinor's

Elinor's heart ſunk within her, and a dewy trembling ſeizing her whole frame, for a moment ſhe felt as if her ſoul was fluttering to get free; a cluſter of watry brilliants crowded into her eye, which *Mr. Lloyd* perceiving, wrung her hand in an agony, and ſaid in a perturbed and hurried tone of voice, "Can there on earth "be a man incapable of breathing out his ſoul "before you? Is there one who would not ſwear "eternal conſtancy to the angelic *Miſs Thorald?* "No, no, impoſſible" added he with vehemence, and ſhooting one glance from his black eyes, that ſaid more than his eloquent tongue could have expreſſed, quitted her hand, and gave way to the force with which ſhe ſprang from him, and bounded along the park.

At dinner, ſhe never once raiſed her eyes towards the ſeat of *Mr. Lloyd*, but kept them ſhaded by her dark brown eye-laſhes, and the light dropping curls of her glittering hair, which in baſhful conſciouſneſs ſhe drew over her ivory forehead: it was now that the heart of *Elinor* firſt experienced real pleaſure in the delights of faſhionable life, her happineſs had been embittered by envy, and the hurry which attended all her enjoyments; but now her ſoul diſſolved in unalloyed tranſports, and if ſhe was pained by her confuſion, it was a delicious ſenſation that heightend the raptures of her bliſs.

Mr. Lloyd bent his eyes towards the ground during the dinner, but now and then, he fixed them with fervent attention upon the face of the

bluſhing

ſbluſhing beauty, as if he would penetrate her inmoſt ſoul. He ſaid little, but ſighed deeply, while the agitated *Elinor* echoed every ſigh. The next morning *Miſs Thorald* inſenſibly wandered to the holly bower: ſhe tuned her lute, and repeated the admired ſtrain of the day before, ſecretly wiſhing to lure her lover to the ſpot; but for once ſhe was diſappointed, three hours, three dreary hours, lingered on with leaden ſtep, and, being exhauſted with ſuſpence, ſhe re-entered the houſe, and ſhed a torrent of tears.

Elinor had now entirely forgotten ambition: *Mr. Lloyd*, either as he was, or as the *Lord Caernarvon*, would always be dear to her, but he had never declared himſelf formally her lover, and what he had ſaid in the holly grove, might only have been a momentary impulſe of gallantry: troubleſome ideas now took poſſeſſion of *Elinor*: ſhe grew melancholy, and a delicate paleneſs encroached upon the roſes of her cheeks: ſhe loved ſolitude, and the public places of the neighbouring town were now deſerted by her.

A month had rolled on ſince the departure of *Sir Edward Harrington*, when *Miſs Thorald* having ſeated herſelf at her *Piano Forte*, warbled her favourite air of "Ah Richard! ah my love!" *Mr. Lloyd* entered the room, and, on her ceaſing at his appearance, deſired, with a deep ſigh, that ſhe would not put a period to ſtrains which penetrated his heart. *Elinor* endeavoured to put off the ſerioufneſs of his addreſs by a forced gaiety: ſhe rallied him upon the melancholy that had ſeized

ſeized him of late, in the livelieſt ſtyle. "Me-
"lancholy, *Madam*, (returned *Mr. Lloyd*,) when
"I have ſo much reaſon to be the reverſe?" *Elinor* ſickened, and by the eager glance of her upraiſed eyes, enquired, what that reaſon was? "This letter (ſaid *Mr. Lloyd*, underſtanding "their expreſſion,) is from *Sir Edward*; he de-
"ſires to be reſpectfully remembered to your "family, and hopes ſoon to have the pleaſure "of introducing *Lady Harrington* to your friend-
"ſhip: laſt *Wedneſday* united him to the ſe-
"cond livelieſt of her ſex." *Miſs Thorald* bluſhed involuntarily and to ſatisfy an uneaſy curioſity, ſhe ventured to ſay, "What *ſir*, you "allow her only the ſecond place: are we to "ſuppoſe from this, that *Mr. Lloyd*, and his "friend, are to poſſeſs the two beſt works of "the creation?"—"You may ſuppoſe with "truth, *Madam*, that the unfortunate *Lloyd*, ad-
"mires, adores, the livelieſt of women but he "is hopeleſs to *poſſeſs* her."

Elinor ſummoned all her remaining reſolution, and while the colour like an unſteady flame, fluttered on her cheek, "May I, without im-
"pertinent curioſity, (ſaid ſhe,) enquire what is "the name of that female who refuſes the prof-
"fered heart of my deareſt friend?"—"If you "mean me, by that title, (anſwered *Lloyd*, "flinging himſelf on the ground in a doubtful "ecſtacy,) he is now at the feet of Heaven's "faireſt image; of her in whoſe happineſs his "life and ſoul are bound."

Elinor

Elinor half roſe, but her trembling limbs denied their office, and ſhe ſunk back with viſible agitation into her ſeat; her bright lip quivered, and a profuſion of rapturous tears ſuffuſed her eyes: ſhe attempted to ſpeak, but was unable to utter more than "Me! *Mr. Lloyd?*"—"Yes, "beautiful *Miſs Thorald*; (anſwered her tranſ-"ported lover,) I here ſwear eternal conſtancy, "and whether thoſe bluſhing lips breathe out a "hope, or ſink me into deſpair, I will ſtill "maintain it: Time that triumphs over all "things, ſhall never deſtroy a paſſion that is "founded upon the moſt delicate friendſhip." *Elinor*'s eyes ſparkled with joy, ſhe bluſhed when ſhe felt they did, and hung down her head—"O! "May I take your ſilence for a favourable omen? "(exclaimed *Lloyd*,) May I interpret from thoſe "brilliant bluſhes, that I am not rejected?"—*Elinor* ſtruggled for articulation, at laſt, with one vehement effort, ſhe ſaid in a low, trembling voice, "I ſhould be carrying my delicacy into "affectation, if I did not haſten to aſſure *Mr.* "*Lloyd* that *his* eſteem is the moſt ardent wiſh "of *my* heart: if an aſſurance of reciprocal "regard can give eaſe to you for a moment, be "ſatisfied that I—I"—ſhe faultered, and the laſt word died upon her tongue; a ſhort ſigh ſupplied its place, and told *Lloyd* what ſhe would have ſaid. No pen can deſcribe his tranſports; he preſſed her hand with a paſſionate fervor, and as ſhe tore herſelf from his preſence,

only uttered with frantic energy " adored *Elinor!*"

The morning was like waking from a troubled dream to both, " ſuch ſober certainty of wa-" king bliſs, they never knew till now." The firſt thought of *Mr. Lloyd*, was to ſeek *Sir James*, before whom he laid open his whole heart: *Sir James* after conſulting his *Lady*, gave both hers, and his own conſent, to their union, whenever it ſhould take place. Time now flew on wings of wind. After a week ſpent in this delicious delirium, *Mr. Lloyd* penned a letter to his *father*, begging his conſent to the propoſed marriage: he expatiated with all a lover's eloquence, upon the charms of *Miſs Thorald*, and mentioned her fortune, only to be deſpiſed. Certain of his *father's* approbation, he ſent the epiſtle without any fear; but the return of poſt was deſtined to cruſh all his ſpringing hopes; and open a ſcene of miſery to which he had before been a ſtranger.

The happy family of the *Thoralds* were all aſſembled at dinner, when a ſervant entered, and gave a letter to *Mr. Lloyd*, he opened, and read it haſtily, his colour changed, and flinging it down, he ſtruck his forehead with his claſped hands, and ſprang out of the room with furious violence: *Elinor* caught up the letter, and read aloud as follows:—" *Richard!* Return to *Lloyd* " *Caſtle* the inſtant you receive this: I *command* " you to *forget* the woman, who has thus drawn " you from your duty; and to prepare yourſelf

"for

" for accompanying me to *Italy*. If you diſo-
" bey, *remember* that the *curſe* of your *creator* will
" purſue you, *joined with that* of your afflicted
" *Father, Caernarvon.*"——Her voice ſunk at the laſt words, and ſhe fell to the floor in a ſwoon.

The firſt emotion of her returning ſenſe, was to call for her lover, " Where, where is " my *Richard?*" (cried ſhe, ſtaring round her,) " Oh Heaven! ſhould his life"—ſobs choaked her voice, and agonies undeſcribable, precipitated her from one fit into another. *Sir James* ſearched every chamber in the houſe, for the unfortunate cauſe of her ſufferings; at laſt he found him diſtractedly wandering in the park; uttering a thouſand incoherent exclamations.

When he heard the ſituation of *Elinor!* he flew to her aſſiſtance, and by his preſence, in ſome meaſure quieted the terrors of her ſoul. " *Lloyd*, (ſaid ſhe, in a languiſhing accent,) " will you leave me?"——My deareſt *Elinor!* (returned her lover, with the bittereſt diſtraction,) " I cannot, I will not leave you! No! " No! death alone ſhall ſever us."—*Lady Thorald* was drowned in tears; but *Sir James* whoſe ſex prevented him from giving way to ſuch ſoul-diſſolving emotions, caught the words of *Lloyd*, and aſſuming a ſerene air, he thus addreſſed him:—" You mean not, *Mr. Lloyd*, " to practice the folly which you ſpeak of? " Sorry ſhould I be, that he, of whom I " ſtill entertain hopes to call my ſon; ſhould

" diſobey the commands of his natural *father*:
" My advice to you is this; as *Lord Caernar-*
" *von*, has not mentioned, having any match
" in his eye for you, return to him, and en-
" deavour to prevail upon him to accompany
" you to *Thoraldſcombe*; and if he beholds my
" daughter, (I ſpeak not with a *father's*, but
" an *impartial* fondneſs) what may we not ex-
" pect? He may then *ſolicit* that hand for his
" ſon, which he now *diſdains*. And tell him
" from me, that if, (though it is impoſſible,)
" that if he is not enraptured with my *Elinor*;
" if he wiſhes not to tranſplant ſo fair a flower
" into his garden; *Sir James Thorald* (much
" as it will wound his feelings,) will treat him
" with that reſpect, and good breeding, which
" the laws of hoſpitality require."

So romantic a ſcheme, met with univerſal approbation by all preſent, except the unfortunate *Elinor*, ſhe proteſted againſt any hopes of ſucceſs from ſo wild an idea, and with ſtreaming eyes exclaimed—" Oh *Richard!* if you leave
" me, I ſhall never, never ſee you more!" It was not poſſible in thoſe moments to determine in what manner to act: therefore while *Miſs Thorald* and her *mother* retired to her chamber, *Sir James* took *Mr. Lloyd* into his ſtudy, and by many arguments perſuaded him, that if he diſobeyed the commands of his *father*, he could never hope for happineſs: the perturbed mind of his miſerable auditor, was ready to receive

receive any advice which gave him a glimpſe of hope. He flung himſelf into a poſt-chaiſe, at the intreaty of *Sir James*, without bidding his beloved *Elinor* adieu.

Miſs Thorald, when ſhe heard that he was gone; and his reaſons for ſo abrupt a departure, endeavoured to calm the anguiſh of her heart; ſhe ſucceeded in ſome meaſure, by ſtilling the tempeſt; but a fatal calm enſued: a ſilent melancholy which undermined the foundations of her health.

Mr. Lloyd had been abſent about a week, when a letter reached *Thoraldſcombe* from him: it contained many paſſionate expreſſions of the tendereſt regard; and alſo that his *father* had not very peremptorily denied his conſent, but inſiſted upon his ſon's accompanying him to *Italy* for two years, and if at the expiration of that time, *he*, and the *Lady*, did not change their minds, he would conſent to their union: He concluded by ſaying, that as he neither doubted her conſtancy, nor his own, he had complyed with the propoſal; and in leſs than five hours after her receival of that, he would be at *Thoraldſcombe* to take leave.—The idea of a ſeparation, was a thouſand daggers to the delicate boſom of *Elinor*; but the happy goal, diſperſed every diſagreeable object; and ſhe was able to bid a long farewel to her lover, when he arrived, with ſome compoſure: Vows of eternal faith, were mutually interchanged, tears

tears, ſhrieks, and agonized groans, at the fatal moment, agitated *Elinor*: the melting ſoul of her *Lloyd* was no leſs affected: he preſſed her in a reſpectful, yet ardent embrace, and tore himſelf from her preſence.

Elinor in the abſence of her lover, combated her grief, and endeavoured by diligent attention to every ſcience, to render herſelf more worthy of him; with ſuch an agreeable idea poſſeſſing her mind, the time of ſeparation appeared ſhortened, and that concern which at firſt ſwelled her burſting ſoul with agony, now ſunk into a tranquil reſignation; the letters which ſhe received from *Lloyd*, were the conſtant companions of her lonely hours, and ſhe contemplated with rapture the arrival of that moment, which ſhould end all the anxieties of a two years ſeparation.—Half of the time was elapſed, when a *nobleman*, who had once known her *father*, came down to C———y, to view an eſtate that he had purchaſed in the neighbourhood,—meeting with *Sir James*, they renewed acquaintance, and the *Duke of Clarges*, became a viſitant at the ſeat of the *Thoralds*: He was ſtill what is called a fine man, and agreeable, though paſt forty; in his youth, he had been diſtinguiſhed for his gallantries, and he ſtill preſerved the character of a gay, elegant, and accompliſhed libertine; (is it poſſible that ſuch words can be coupled together!) he was opulent above all the Engliſh nobility; and concealed

concealed, under the guiſe of complacency and undeſigning goodnature, the deepeſt ſchemes of premeditated villainy.

Such a man as this, could not fail ſoon to penetrate into the characters of the whole family: He diſcovered, that the predominant paſſion of *Lady Thorald*, was ambition; that of *Sir James*, love of peace, and a fervent adoration of his child: whoſe foible he eaſily found was the ſame as her *Mother's*; joined to a quick, and poignant ſenſe of an injury: Thus furniſhed with knowledge of the leading features of their minds, the *Duke of Clarges* ſnatched his opportunity of moulding them to his purpoſe: From *Lady Thorald*, who was all openneſs he cautiouſly gathered every anecdote of *Lloyd* and *Elinor*. "Ah! *Madam*," ſaid he, one day, after a diſcourſe with her *Ladyſhip*, aſſuming the profoundeſt look of reſpect; "Ah! *Madam*, could I believe ſuch "an aſſurance but from your mouth! *Lord* "*Caernarvon refuſe* the hand of the lovely "*Miſs Thorald*, for his ſon! *Lord Caernarvon* "*reject* an alliance with ſo noble a houſe as "yours! Heavens, what inſolence! A family "like *his*, that, though it boaſts of its an-"ceſtry, is tottering through that very age "and will ſoon ſink into that duſt, from "whence it firſt had origin: a man like the "*Lord Caernarvon*, whoſe income is hardly "capable to ſupply the wants of a frugal life, "and *he* to *ſcorn* the fortune of *Miſs Thorald!*

"a fortune

" a fortune in herſelf, to whom the merit of " *Mr. Lloyd* is as faint, as one of the dimmeſt " ſtars in Heaven, to the glorious orb of day. " O! Beauty, O! Virtue, how art thou in- " ſulted!"—He affected to check the violence of his tranſports, after he had pronounced this nonſenſe, and earneſtly intreated *Lady Thorald* to pardon the warmth with which " which he had ſpoken of young *Lloyd*. But " a theme like that which engaged him, " muſt, (he exclaimed) " whirl the peaceful boſom of " an *Anchorite*, into all the furious rage of a " tempeſt."—No more he ſaid at that inter- view, but he had uttered ſufficient, to give *Lady Thorald* a glimmering of his purpoſe; a deceitful hope, which like the glowing vapour of the night, beams but to miſlead!

The fond *Mother* began to yield up her ſoul to the idea of beholding her *Daughter* the *Ducheſs of Clarges*; and eagerly caught at every cruel inſinuation of the *Duke's*, which could juſtify the coldneſs with which ſhe anticipated the return of the unfortunate *Lloyd*. The *Noble- man* himſelf, beheld in *Elinor*, a lovely woman, whoſe charms heightened his libertine wiſhes, but whoſe virtues chilling every ſanguine ex- pectation, he looked at her, as on one, whom he would willingly have his *Miſtreſs*; but if her virtue was a ſecurity againſt temptation, he felt, that he could rather bear the galling chain of wedlock, than the ſharp arrow of ſtinging deſire.

From

From her converſation he found *Lloyd* was the entire poſſeſſor of her heart: and ſaw how abſurd it would be to hope, that ſhe ſhould ſacrifice her love for nothing. In a union with *Lloyd*, ſhe would have the full joy, of being joined to the man of her affections, with an elegant fortune and a noble title; but as his *Miſtreſs*, ſhe would be ſuffering (for a man to whom ſhe was not indifferent,) infamy, the contempt of her parents, and a ſecluſion from ſociety: It was impoſſible that ſuch a revolution ſhould take place in her mind, as to prefer *pain* to *bliſs!* And the *Duke of Clarges* ſaw with regret, that to make the poſſeſſion of *Elinor* probable, he muſt lay his title, hand, and fortune at her feet.—Having determined in his mind to purſue her in an honourable way; he prudently ſecured *Lady Thorald*, as his firſt friend; he diſcloſed to her a paſſion, which in his words, was the moſt exalted, ardent, yet ill-ſtarred love, that ever racked a human breaſt; he raved, he appeared half frantic, when he contemplated the return of *Mr. Lloyd*; and then, when the diſorder into which he had thrown the good old *Lady*, ſtruck his attention; he ſunk into ſilent grief; he wrung her hand, he wept, he ſobbed like a child; he counterfeited even a more unmanly anguiſh than agitated him; but ſuch behaviour had its effect upon *Lady Thorald*; ſhe profeſſed herſelf his friend, and to quiet his emotions, vowed to be intereſted alone for him. With *Miſs Thorald*, he

he uſed other methods; her mind more refined than her *Mother's*, required to be treated with the diſtant tenderneſs of a gentle lover: Before her, he was melancholy, and inattentive to all around him; but *to* her, he diſtinguiſhed himſelf, by a thouſand trifling, yet ſpeaking attentions, which filled the unſuſpecting ſoul of *Elinor* with kind concern; ſhe thought him worthy, and ſhe ſighed to think that he was born to unhappineſs: ſhe regarded his ducal coronet, not as a loſs ſhe ſhould grieve after, but as a ſplendid lure, which being held forth to her, ſhe rejected for her *Lloyd*; it was not a matter of regret, but a cauſe of joy: Love had ſilenced ambition; and her whole life was wrapt in the hope of being one day the wife of her *Richard*.

In the midſt of this delicious dream, a ſudden whirlwind awakened her.—The *Duke of Clarges* found, that not even *ambition* could overcome *love*; he muſt extinguiſh that paſſion, and by lighting up another *revenge*, make her his own. He bribed one of *Sir James's* ſervants; who daily rode to C———y for the receival, and putting in of letters, to deliver thoſe which were *for*, and *from Miſs Thorald* into his hands. By this piece of cruelty, he arouſed anxieties, at firſt for the ſafety of her lover, in the gentle breaſt of *Elinor*; but as ſhe, by the Papers, ſaw many accounts of *Lord Caernarvon*, and his ſon, uneaſy doubts diſturbed her reſt, and many a bitter, though ſilent pang rent her fluctuating heart.

heart. His *Grace* beheld the effects of his malevolent machinations, working out his purpoſe: Now was the time to diſcloſe his paſſion; a perſonal interview he dreaded; one falſe ſtep might hurl him to deſtruction; therefore thinking it more adviſeable to truſt to the cool efforts of his pen, he wrote a letter to *Miſs Thorald*, wherein he appeared wholly ignorant of a rival, and hinted at the tender regard ſhe appeared to have for him; and ended, by ſaying, that himſelf and all his poſſeſſions were at her mercy. To this letter, which was delivered to *Elinor*, whilſt in her chamber, ſhe returned an anſwer in theſe words. "I know, that I am "going to do, what will agitate and enrage "my *Mother*, for ſhe is too plainly your friend, "but, you have been deceived, *Sir*, if you "ſeriouſly thought I ever loved you; it was "bare pity, which actuated my conduct; I "feel it is only compaſſion, and that your "fate is far leſs intereſting to me, than that "of one, who (I am not bluſhing while I "write, nor I need not,) poſſeſſes the deareſt "affections of a heart, which being framed "in the ſofteſt mould of ſenſibility, its *pity* "might eaſily be miſtaken, for the *love* of a "leſs melting boſom. I could not reject you "for ever, without giving you a more generous "reaſon, than mere indifference; truth will "not let me ſay, *indifference*, for my behaviour "to you, has evinced the higheſt eſteem: I "have therefore told you, that another poſſeſſes

"the

" the heart, which you have vainly imagined
" your own; and I ſolemnly repeat, that no-
" thing on earth, ſhall alter the affection to-
" wards him, of yours, with pity, and friendly
" regard—*Elinor Thorald.*"

The diſappointment and rage of the *Duke of Clarges*, is not poſſible to be conceived. He ſtormed, he vowed revenge againſt the innocent cauſe of his ſufferings: *Satan* who prompted the oath, facilitated its execution, and filled the mind of his *Grace* with a ſcheme, which could be engendered by a diabolical brain alone. The *letter* of *Miſs Thorald*, (being incloſed in a cover, was without a ſuperſcription,) he directed in his own hand to *Lloyd*, which was impoſſible to be known from that of *Sir James*, and put it into the poſt himſelf.

He acquainted *Lady Thorald* with his unſucceſsful efforts, and excuſed himſelf from ſhewing her the letter, as he ſaid he had, in the firſt tranſports of his rage, torn it to a thouſand fragments: Yet he begged, he entreated, permiſſion to ſtay a little longer at *Thoraldſcombe*, to watch any favourable change in the mind of *Elinor*, which from *Mr. Lloyd's* neglect of writing, might take place. *Lady Thorald*, who long had waited for a moment to avow her new ſentiments, burſt into a furious rage at the inſolence of the young man, who dared to treat the love of her child with ſuch contempt. *Miſs Thorald* beheld it with aſtoniſhment; and though the apparent cruel treatment

of

of *Lloyd*, would have juſtified her ſuſpecting him, ſhe only wept in ſolitude, and inwardly mourned the doubtful cloud, that overhung her fortunes.—There remained only five months, and he would return; when ſhe received from *Italy*, a hardly legible ſcrawl, in his hand, which contained theſe words.——"A few "days unites, to a woman of beauty and rank, "*he* who *once* ſubſcribed himſelf, *Miſs Tho-* "*rald's lover*, but *now* to her, *only*, *Richard* "*Lloyd*."

A ſhock, like that of electric fire, ſhook the petrifying frame of *Elinor*; in one moment, ſhe ſhrieked with the furious ſcream of deſpair; and in one moment, ſhe was lifeleſs upon the ground. *Lady Thorald* heard the cry of her beloved child: She ruſhed into the apartment, and by every kind art, endeavoured to reſtore her to herſelf; ſhe brought her to life, but not to her ſenſes: The ſtroke was too violent, for her reaſon, and ſhe raved with all the incoherency of delirium: a terrible fever followed, which held her in the view of death for a fortnight; at length its criſis, which was favorable, reſtored her to her ſenſes.

The *Duke of Clarges*, who had opened the letter ere it reached her, caught the opportunity, and artfully contrived to heighten the reſentment of *Lady Thorald*, againſt *Lloyd*; he rendered her an inſtrument of his purpoſe: for ſhe ceaſed not to revile the character, the behaviour of the wretched *Richard*; and by inflaming the

pride of her daughter to revenge ſuch treatment; ſhe paved the way for the declarations of *Clarges*. This man of deceit, was too well verſed in all the arts of deluſion, to preſs his ſuit to the *dying Elinor:* He waited until returning health ſhould ſtrengthen her reſentment; and when the commands of her parents, aiding her bleeding feelings; her ſoft pity of his fate; and the fervor of his perſuaſions, ſhould make her yield to his wiſhes.—The lucky moment at laſt arrived.—*Sir James*, who felt wounded by the ſlight ſhewn to his daughter, had been reprobating the heart of the inconſtant *Lloyd*; had even gone ſo far, as to command her to forget him; and hinted at the reſpectful love of the *Duke of Clarges*. Her *mother* called forth every argument of affronted dignity; and repeating *her* fixed purpoſe, was never to regard *Lloyd* in any other light, than the baſeſt of mankind: which determination, *Sir James*, who was leſs violent only aſſented to, by a ſigh, and a ſtrong wiſh, to behold his child the *Ducheſs of Clarges.—Elinor*, when left to herſelf, was touched by ſuch gentle love; and ſummoning up all her long forgotten pride, was endeavouring to work herſelf up into ſuch a reſentment, as would obliterate every tender idea; when in a moment, o'er which every malicious ſtar ſhed its baneful influence, the *Duke of Clarges* entered, and caſting himſelf proſtrate, diſcovered by words, the paſſion which filled his ſoul. *Elinor's* mind was in a whirl;

duty, pity, wounded-pride, revenge all were in arms againſt love; before ſo many combatants it muſt, it did fall: In a tumult of diſtraction, ſhe conſented to become the *Ducheſs of Clarges* on the very next morning.—The ſtruggle was now over; and ſhe was to think of her once-loved *Lloyd no more:* Her reſolution ſickened; ſhe would often wiſh to go, and wear out her life in ſolitude; but the exhortations, the joy, the gratitude of her mother, penetrated her ſoul; and though the ſacrifice was much, ſhe reſolved to make it.

In the mean time, the wretched *Lloyd* was a prey to the bittereſt anguiſh: the diſcontinuance of the correſpondence with his *Elinor* racked his heart; and to him, the receival of that epiſtle, (intended for the *Duke of Clarges,*) was as a thunderbolt. In the firſt tranſports of his frenzy, he determined to unite himſelf to a lady, deſtined by his father to be his wife: And in this temper, he penned the letter to *Elinor*; which decided her fate; wild fury and deſpair, guided his hand, but a little time brought him back to reaſon; and hope, ſtill flattering him with he knew not what, altered his reſolutions; and he vowed if *Miſs Thorald* could not be his, to marry no other upon the earth. He wrote to his beloved friend *Sir Edward Harrington*, wherein, he recounted every pang which he had ſuffered: and encloſed the fatal letter, that had given riſe to all his misfortunes.——*Harrington*, who tenderly eſteemed his

his friend, was distracted at this intelligence. He set off immediately for *Kent*, as the news of *Miss Thorald's* intended marriage, had reached the *capital* and arriving at *Thoraldscombe*, he intreated a few minutes private conversation with her. *Elinor*, though her heart died within her, obeyed his summons, and attended him into her *Library*. Ere they were both seated, *Sir Edward*, whose whole frame shook with tremulous agitation; whose lips quivered, and whose cheek was as pale as ashes, addressed her thus: "*Miss Thorald!* What foundation is "there for this cruel report, which prevails in "*London?* Tell me, for God's sake, tell me! "Do you mean to make my friend miserable?" *Elinor* collected all her pride to her assistance, and replied, "If you call *Mr.* ———" her voice shook—his name, died on her tongue—recovering herself—"If you call the son of "*Lord Caernarvon*, your friend; I know not "how I shall make *him* miserable. My actions "spring from my own free will; and he, nor "no one, has any right to exact an account of "them. If you come to insult me with any "message from *him*, *Sir Edward*, you are an "unwelcome visitor." She made a motion to withdraw; but *Harrington* catching her hand.—"Stay *Miss Thorald!* (cried he) "hear me! I will not insult you; oblige me "by replies to these few questions. Do you "love my friend?"—*Elinor* burst into tears, and with a faultering voice, replied—"I do "not."

" not."—" Merciful Heaven! (exclaimed her " examiner,) Did you *ever* love him?"—O! " tenderly, *too tenderly!*" cried *Miſs Thorald*, ſinking into a chair, " and *ſtill* this bleeding " heart, holds within it, his perjured image!" *Harrington* ſtared with wild amaze—" Are " you going to be united to the *Duke of Clarges?*" —" I am his *wife ſir*,"—ſaid *Elinor*, recalling all her former reſolutions. " Gracious God!" (crid *Sir Edward*, with a voice ſcarce human,) " Baſe, baſe woman! To call *him perjured*; " whoſe conſtant heart, beat but for *you*, the " writer of this letter,"—As he ſpoke, he held the fatal paper to her view, regarding her with the ſternneſs of an everlaſting judge. A flaſh of truth burſt upon her ſoul; ſhe ſhrieked out the name of "*Clarges!*—the villain *Clarges!*" —And ſunk back on her ſeat. *Harrington* would call no aſſiſtance; he brought her with difficulty back to this world: She ſtruck her hands upon her breaſt; in wild agony ſhe claſped them together; ſhe wept, ſhe kneeled, ſhe intreated forgiveneſs of *Lloyd*; of Heaven; and imprecated the moſt horrid curſes to fall on the head of *Clarges:* ſhe averted her face from the ſilent gaze of *Harrington*; ſhe wept, ſhe ſhrieked anſwers to all his queſtions! but alas! he needed not to aſk her; he was too clearly convinced from her incoherent expreſſions, that ſhe had been the prey of a villain. " Leave " me, *Sir Edward*," ſhe cried, with her face overflowed by tears—" Fly the preſence of

" a wretch who was born to make others mise-
" rable!"—As ſhe ſpoke, the tears ceaſed to flow from her eyes; ſhe threw them up with wildneſs, and from the varying expreſſions of her features, appeared relapſing into her frantic deſpair: *Sir Edward*, dreading to be witneſs to ſuch another ſcene, made her a hurrying bow, at the ſame time, ſighing deeply, left the *Library*.—*Elinor*, no ſooner found herſelf alone, than ſhe flew down a long flight of ſtairs; with the ſwiftneſs of an eagle, darted into the apartment, which held her parents and her huſband: *Clarges* roſe, and approached her with the tenderneſs natural to a man, that had been a huſband only two days. She ſhrunk from him with horror—" Off! Off!" cried the agonized *Dutcheſs*—" I come to reproach you with your
" crimes—I come to ſay—I abhor you—that
" you have ruined my peace for ever—and
" robbed me of my *Lloyd*—yes *Monſter*, thou
" haſt"—Her feeble frame was exhauſted with ſuch violence of exertion, and ſhe fell into the open arms of her agitated *Father*; while her burſting heart found vent, by copious ſhowers of ſcalding tears, and the deepeſt ſoul-piercing groans, " Gracious God!" (exclaimed *Sir James*,) " Spare my child! My *Elinor*, my
" darling, ſpeak to thy unhappy *Father!* Of
" what *villain* doſt thou talk? Behold before
" thee, no one but thy *huſband!* give him *one*
" look!"—*Clarges*, encouraged by this addreſs, preſſed forward, and ſeized her hand; but ſhe

ſhrieked

ſhrieked aloud, and ſummoning all her ſtrength, violently wrenched it from his graſp—" My " *Father!* My *Father!*" ſhe wept out, as ſhe clung terrified around his neck,—" If you love " me, ſave me from the touch of the abhorred " *Clarges!*"—*Sir James*, looked at the *Duke* with agitation, and begged him to withdraw; he obeyed, expreſſing wonder at the madneſs of his *Dutcheſs*.—As ſoon as he had left them, *Sir James*, and *Lady Thorald*, in the moſt pathetic terms, beſought the wild-eyed *Elinor*, to acquaint him with the occaſion of her terror. She diſengaged herſelf from her *father's* arms, and flinging herſelf at his feet; gave a broken, though too circumſtantial a narration of the *Duke's* guilt. The ſurpriſe and ſorrow of her parents, was exceſſive: *Elinor*, with her ſtreaming eyes raiſed to Heaven, vowed ſhe would never live under the ſame roof with him, but that ſhe would ſeclude herſelf from the world, in ſome obſcure ſolitude, and there expiate her crime (as ſhe termed it) by her ſufferings.

We muſt paſs over the meeting of *Sir James*, and his *ſon-in-law*; the one upbraiding with the warmth and ſeverity of injured virtue; the other braving it, with the ſhameleſs intrepidity of hardened vice: At laſt it was finally determined, that the *Duke of Clarges* ſhould give to his youthful *Dutcheſs*, a ſeat he had on his lands in the *Iſle of Wight*, and that he would never endeavour to diſturb her peace, while in that retirement. To ſuch an accommodation,

he aſſented with pleaſure; for a two days poſſeſſion had abated the paſſion of this inconſtant man: like a child who ſighed for a brilliant toy, and when it becomes its own, toſſes it by, regardleſs of its beauty: The new charms of *Miſs Thorald*, had attracted them; the difficulties animated him; and he fancied that he loved her with an unalterable ardour; but poſſeſſion convinced him it was only novelty, and the deſire of ſurmounting obſtacles, which kept alive a flame, that now, when no longer the breeze of alternate hope and fear kindled it into heat, died by degrees away, and left in his boſom, but the embers of a once vigorous fire.

Every preliminary thus adjuſted the miſerable *Ducheſs of Clarges*, accompanied by her parents, removed to *Cliffwood-Cove* in the *Iſle of Wight:* It was moſt romantically ſituated; the *villa* being placed upon a fertile eminence, that commanded a proſpect of the lands below, and the wide ocean.—It was one of *Elinor's* melancholy pleaſures to deſcend to the ſtrand, and being a witneſs to the warring elements, aſſimilate her fate to them; and while ſhe dropt bitter tears upon the high-heaving wave, that often waſhed her feet, ſhe would clothe her thoughts in the garb of the penſive muſe.

She had been in this retirement near a month, when a letter was delivered to her by a ſervant on horſeback, who rode off the inſtant he gave it her: the hand her palpitating heart too readily

dily acknowledged: ſhe tore it open, with a mixture of pain and pleaſure; ſhe *dreaded* reproaches, ſhe *hoped* for tenderneſs from his love: It contained theſe lines.

" Much injured, and for ever loved *Elinor*.

" I DO not write to *diſturb* thy peace, but to " *augment* it: I do not think *thee* guilty: I do " not ceaſe to love thee—no, that heart which " has never heaved for another, ſhall beat for " thee with a melancholy conſtancy: In my " laſt moments thy image ſhall be my ſupport: " thy name ſhall be the laſt ſound from my " lips:—I leave England for the Eaſt-Indies " in the Lancaſter:—I quit it for ever: Fare- " well firſt and laſt love of this faithful boſom: " If yet, thou doſt eſteem me, let this ſcrawl " be often the companion of thy lonely hours; " let it hear thy ſighs; let it drink thy falling " tears; and the idea ſhall ſoothe to a penſive " joy, the agitated mind of thy

" *Caernarvon*."

" Yes *Richard!* (exclaimed the weeping " *Dutcheſs*) This paper ſhall *never* quit *my* " boſom: It ſhall be *thy* repreſentative, and it " ſhall be the partner of all my woes."—She kiſſed it; ſhe bedewed it with her tears; and placing it on her heart, gave a looſe to all the feelings which ſtruggled within her: From the concluſion of his epiſtle, ſhe ſaw that his *father* muſt be no more; ſhe gave a tear to his death, for her ſoul was all ſoftneſs.—To *Richard* ſhe kept her promiſe, for his ſcrawl was the conſtant

ſtant companion of her walks.—A few days after this incident, a veſſel was wrecked on the coaſt, and almoſt every ſoul periſhed: the next evening *Elinor* went to view the veſtiges of the wreck; ſhe wept over the unfortunate mariners: the day was gloomy and boiſterous, and her ideas grew more than uſually ſad: In one of thoſe moments which have been mentioned, when the melancholy muſe inſpired her thoughts, ſhe compoſed the following

ELEGY:

Hark! what a peal of loudly-rattling wind!
The ruſhing waters echo back its roar,
The waves advance, each crowding ſwift behind,
And daſh with furious foam the rocky ſhore.

Say! wherefore Ocean, doſt thou laſh this ſtrand?
Say! weeping whirlwinds, wherefore do you ſtorm?
Is it becauſe, upon its pitying land,
It holds this guilty, this deſtructive form?

Yes! more it rages: would ye tempeſts dread?
Would ye, the repentant ſinner ſwiftly ſweep?
Would you, ye deaf'ning billows, whelm this head?
And bear this body to the endleſs deep?

Ah! little need ye ſeek a wretch's death,
Whoſe broken heart can only mourn and weep;
Soon ſorrow's graſp ſhall ſtop her ſighing breath,
Soon ſhall ſhe ſink into her laſting ſleep!

Fain would ſhe, leaping from the tempting beach,
Plunge 'mid the foaming ſurge, no more to riſe;
Then Elinor, were far from miſ'ry's reach!
But Heaven the ſoul-condemning crime denies.

Slow fails the ſettling cloud o'er every wave,
Now on the waters brim deſcends in ſhowers,
Each muddy heap appears a liquid grave,
O'er thoſe who ſunk beneath their forceful powers.

O! Sea,

O! Sea, hadſt thou but ſpared th' unwilling ſoul,
That clung to objects of that ſoul's repoſe,
And if thy billows o'er one head muſt roll,
Snatch'd me a wiſhing victim from my woes!

On *Elinor's* return home, ſhe took up the newſpaper, which lay on the table, and glancing her eye careleſsly over the contents, to oblige her father, reading thoſe parts which were intereſting, ſhe ſaw theſe words:—"*Iſle of Wight*— "An *Eaſt Indiaman* was wrecked off this coaſt; "on the night of the 27th ſhe went to the "bottom, almoſt as ſoon as ſhe ſtruck; and "all the humane exertions of the people on "the *Iſland* were ineffectual to ſave more than "three *mariners*, who were taken up appa- "rently lifeleſs. From whom we learn, that "the name of the veſſel was the *Lancaſter*."— The paper dropt from her hand, ſhe raiſed her eyes to Heaven, and ſinking on her knees, ſaid in a low voice, "I am reſigned to my "fate—Merciful God! what new anguiſh "have I yet to ſuffer? Thou haſt taken *Lloyd* "to thyſelf, but O! do not ſnatch from me my "parents!"

She roſe, and endeavoured to diſperſe the tears which were crouding into her radiant eyes. —"Roll on, I will not ſtay thee, (ſaid ſhe) "Heaven ſees that they are not tears of regret; "for his pure ſoul, mixing with its Heavenly "kindred: No, that would be ſelfiſh: They "flow, becauſe he periſhed far from his home,

"from

" from the affectionate attention of his *Elinor*;
" ſhe would have watched him on a death-bed:
" She would have aſſiſted in his dying prayers.
" But he is no more! *He* is happy, and *I* will
" not be miſerable!"

Sir James and *Lady Thorald* gazed at her with admiration—" My angelic child!" ſaid her *father*, wrapping her in a parental embrace, whi'e tears of mingled rapture and ſorrow, chaſed one another down his manly cheeks—" Heaven has allotted thee trials to call forth
" virtues, which had been hid beneath the
" weight of proſperity." " Can you forgive
" *me* my *Elinor?*" aſked her weeping *Mother*,
" who was acceſſary to his death, by my
" guilty partiality for the *Duke of Clarges*."
" Dear *Sir!* dear *Madam!*" ſaid their *daughter*, bedewing each of their hands with her grateful tears—" I live but for you; I baniſh all my
" deſpair; I dedicate myſelf to your happineſs;
" yet, will you ſometimes pardon the weak-
" neſs of your *child*, if ſhe gives to the drown-
" ing image of her adored *Lloyd*, a few tribu-
" tary drops?"

From that inſtant the *Ducheſs of Clarges* endeavoured by a ſerene reſignation to the will of providence, to render the ſufferings of her parents leſs poignant: yet often in her ſolitary rambles, when the idea of the youthful *Caernarvon* preſented itſelf, ſhe would give way to the deepeſt anguiſh; from which nothing but

but the inſtant recollection of the proteſtations ſhe had made to the *Deity*, ever relieved her.

Lady Thorald, though ſhe appeared cheerful, wept in ſecret, for the fate of her idolized child, whoſe morning of life roſe with the bright ſun of fond expectation; but in the midſt of its brilliant noon, the ſudden thunder-ſtorm burſt on her head with all its fury: She regarded her heightened beauty with regret, which bloomed through her tears, like a lonely flower in a wilderneſs, whoſe bluſhing boſom expanding in full perfection, ſtill holds on its fragrant ſurface the dewy moiſture of the morn: She ſaw it

——"Born to bluſh unſeen,
"And waſte its ſweetneſs in the deſart air."

Such were the feelings of *Lady Thorald*.—But *Sir James*, who had nothing to reproach himſelf with, felt only the pure ſorrow of an innocent boſom.—O! Innocence, how divine is thy influence, when thou canſt even convert the bitter cup of miſery into the nectar of delight!

Sir James beheld the misfortunes of his family as a bleſſing from his *Creator*. "Whom the Lord chaſtiſeth, he loveth," were the words that ever ſpoke peace to his heart; and though he had given a ſigh to the memory of *Lloyd*, yet he regarded his fatal end, only as a ſpecial tranſlation from this to a celeſtial world; from whence he would look with the benignity of an Angel on the mortals he had loved in life.—A

week

week ſince the deſtructive wreck, had paſſed over the family of the *Thoralds*; and the wounds of *Elinor's* yet bleeding heart, were ſlowly cloſing, when ſhe wandered forth among the embowering trees of the foreſt, which ſurrounded the *villa*; the deep ſhadows of evening were falling faſt around; the ſummer weſt wind at intervals, ſlowly lifted the light leaves of the pallid aſh; the ſound of the diſtant waves of the Ocean, whoſe ſhrunk waters had for a while deſerted the beach; joined to the melancholy trill of a *Nightingale*, concealed in the depths of the wood, ſunk her mind into a ſoft ſadneſs, that wakened the voice of *Poeſy*, who whiſpered as ſhe ſtrayed along, the following

SONNET:

O Clifford Cove! amid thy peaceful ſhades,
Oft let me wander at the cloſe of day,
When twilights miſts uſurp the ſolar ray,
And deeper gloom the foreſts ample glades:

There, when the ſhiv'ring breeze low murm'ring fades;
When only Philomela's wailing lay,
Riſes in thrilling height, then dies away,
And all my ſoul with melting woe pervades.

Haply before theſe ever ſtreaming eyes,
Warned by the voluntary death bells toll,
That rouſes all the terrors of my ſoul,
The form of dear departed Lloyd may riſe.

Ah Richard! come not with reproaches dart,
Wrapt in terrific horrors obvious gloom;
Rather ſome pitying ſeraphs form aſſume,
To ſhed hope's balm upon this bleeding heart.

As

As ſhe finiſhed the laſt line, the tears ſtole ſilently over her cheek; ſhe ſtopped in the midſt of her walk, and the days that were paſt, ruſhed with their full force upon her view. The ſudden appearance of one of her ſervants awakened her from her trance: She haſtily wiped her eye, and took out of his hand a letter that he had brought her: The gloom which enveloped her, prevented her from opening it in the wood, therefore hurrying home, by the help of a light, ſhe diſcovered it to be her huſband's hand: A few weeks before ſhe would have torn it into pieces; but now the tumult of her mind was ſubſided, and ſhe opened it, though not without ſtrong emotions of rekindling indignation. The formation of the letters, bore viſible marks of a perturbed heart: It was conceived in the following words:

" I am at the point of death; if the requeſt " of a repentant and dying man, can move " your much injured, and too tender ſoul; I " conjure you to come to my Town Houſe, " where languiſhes for your forgiveneſs the " wretch *Clarges*."

Elinor was ſhocked; the guilty *Clarges* on a death-bead, was an image aweful and terrific, yet ſhe complied with his deſire, and accompanied by her parents, began her journey to the Capital; which by unremitted perſeverance ſhe reached in a ſhorter time than was almoſt probable.

When

When ſhe entered the chamber of her miſerable *huſband*; her limbs trembled, her colour fled, and ſhe tottered to his bed-ſide, leaning on the ſupporting arms of *Sir James* and *Lady Thorald*.—The *Duke* was an object of horror, his features were diſtracted with deſpair, and ſeveral gaſhes which were cloſed appeared viſibly on his head. He put out his hand; *Elinor* ſhrunk back, but conſcious of it, ſhe again put forth *her* hand, and took *his*. "*Elinor!*" ſaid he, in a low hollow voice,—"Can *you* for-"give me? I ſhall not die in peace without "*your* pardon—I have been a ſinner, but I "hope to make ſome atonement, by joining "your hand with that of *Lord Caernarvon's*." —The *Ducheſs*, here burſt into tears: *Sir James* ſighed, and ſaid, "You are then ignorant of "the death of *Mr. Lloyd?* I will call him ſo, "for under that title I *firſt* loved him." "Dead!" reitereated the *Duke*—"Alas!" replied *Sir James*,—"The unfortunate youth, "periſhed in a veſſel on the coaſt of the *Iſle of* "*Wight*"—"You are deceived *Sir James*," returned *Clarges*, "He was one of the three "ſaved: Heaven ſpared *him*, to reward the "tried virtue of your daughter."—"Merciful "God!" exclaimed *Elinor*, in a tranſport of joy, ſinking gently into the arms of her *Mother*; her heart ceaſed to beat, the world ſwam before her gradual cloſing eyes, and in one inſtant ſhe was lifeleſs. *Lady Thorald* bore her breathleſs body into the air, and by applying every

every reſtorative, brought her back to life. When recovered, the firſt ſentence of her lips, was a thankſgiving to the allwiſe and merciful Being, who had preſerved him. Returned into the *Duke of Clarges's* room, and ſeated on a chair by his bed-ſide, he addreſſed her thus:

" I acknowledge with ſhame, that I have " been the moſt villainous of men: To your " own lovelineſs, dear *Elinor*, impute the riſe " of my guilt.—I concealed from you every " letter that came from *Mr. Lloyd*—I ſtopped " every epiſtle of yours to him.—I directed " your refuſal of me in the hand of *Sir James*, " and forwarded it to him—I peruſed his an- " ſwer, but I re-ſealed it, and permitted it to " reach you—My ſnares entrapped you, and " you became mine.—I was not inconſolable " at your ſecluſion in *Cliffwood-Cave*; and " perhaps, I ſhould not now be thus repentant, " but for the ſake of him, whom I have injured. " I was returning a few days ago from my " *villa* in *Kent*, on horſeback, attended but by " one ſervant. It was near dark, when as I " croſſed *Baxley Heath*, three highwaymen at- " tacked us; my coward ſervant fled, and " left me to their fury; they pulled me from " my horſe; I defended myſelf with all my " ſtrength, yet could not help receiving ſeve- " ral dangerous wounds from their knives: I " was almoſt exhauſted, and juſt on the point " of ceaſing reſiſtance, when a couple of horſe- " men appeared in ſight, and ſeeing my ſitu-

" ation,

" ation, made directly up to me. I raiſed up " my face, and my guilty eye met that of the " young *Caernarvon*." " The *Duke of Clarges!*" exclaimed *Sir Edward Harrington*, (who was with him,) in a tone of diſdain: " The *Viſcount* " regarded me with pity and abhorrence," " It is no time for the recollection of his " guilt," ſaid her, and fired a piſtol at one of " the ruffians, who ſtood in a poſture of defence. " The *ball* lodged in his body, which was no " ſooner diſcovered by his comrades, than they " ſpurred their horſes, the wounded man do- " ing the ſame, and fled.—The generous *Lloyd* " alighted, and with the aſſiſtance of *Sir Ed-* " *ward*, bound up my wounds with their hand- " kerchiefs; they ſeated me on my horſe, and " conducted me to the next town, where he " procured a *poſt-chaiſe*, and brought me to " this houſe.—Benevolent man! who could " in general philanthropy, forget the private " injuries which I had done to him! But *his* " conduct has awakened my ſleeping conſcience: " *I* have been *repentant*, and *he* has pardoned " me.—From him I learn, that he was one of " the three which eſcaped the wreck: and " that to prevent you from feeling the anguiſh " of conceiving him an exile in a foreign coun- " try, he would not ſeek to undeceive you " reſpecting the report of his death. The " ſhock *once* over, he hoped you would reſign " yourſelf to his fate; and it would have been " cruel in him to diſturb your ſerenity. He

" wrote

" wrote to *Sir Edward*, and deſired his com-
" pany in *town*, until another *Indiaman* ſailed:
" *Harrington* complied with his requeſt, he
" hurried to him; and it was on their road to
" the *capital*, when providence ſent them to
" my reſcue.—Had I died under the knives of
" the *robbers*, I had not expiated my crimes by
" repentance: but I am ſpared to draw the
" veil from off the character of *Lloyd*, and
" to unite you with each other!"—He ceaſed, and laying his head upon his pillow was ſilent; trying to recover his ſtrength, which was quite exhauſted by the length of his narration.

The *Ducheſs* retired early to her room, where ſhe breathed out her gratitude to Heaven for its protection: ſhe prayed for the contrite ſoul of the dying *Duke*; and ſurely from a heart ſo pure, thoſe *prayers* muſt have been heard!—At midnight, ſhe was awakened from the firſt peaceful ſlumber ſhe had for ſome time taſted, by a requeſt, for her to repair to the chamber of *Clarges*, who was in his laſt moments: Her *Mother*, who led her in, whiſpered, " that ſhe would ſee *Lloyd*." *Elinor* entered, ſhe dared not to raiſe her eyes; the *Duke* made a motion for her to approach him; he beckoned her lover; they both flung themſelves on their knees at his bed-ſide.—" *Lloyd!* (ſaid he, in a broken and inward voice,) " Take the hand
" of my *Elinor*; I reſign her to thee, to *thy*
" *worth*. O! had *I* been as virtuous, I ſhould
" not now experience the *horrors* of death!

" *Sir*

" *Sir James! Lady Thorald! Lloyd!* and *you* " my *Elinor!* pray for me, petition for me " the forgiveneſs of Heaven!"——" The *Al-* " *mighty* forgive your crimes," was the expreſſion from every lip, but that of the *Dutcheſs*; ſhe *wept* it, and ſaid it internally. He bade her, and them all *adieu*; and then deſired to be left alone with *Sir James* and his attendants, but ere the ſuffocating *Ducheſs* could be led from this ſcene of horror, the laſt groan of *Clarges* proceeded from his chamber. *Sir James* quitted his breathleſs body, and endeavoured with *Lloyd* and *Lady Thorald*, to recover *Elinor* from the terror which curdled her blood.—It was no time for tranſports—*Caernarvon* was too much affected to breathe out one expreſſion of joy: he viewed her in ſilence, and by the advice of *Lady Thorald*, he quitted *Clarges-Houſe* for his own apartments at *Sir Edward Harrington's*.—He allowed four days for the recovery of the beautiful mourner's ſpirits, ere he re-entered it; but when he did, their meeting was more affecting than imagination can conceive; deſcription fades before it: *Lloyd* delicately refrained from mentioning his hopes of happineſs in the poſſeſſion of an object, he had ſo long, ſo conſtantly loved.—The remains of the deceaſed *Duke* were interred with great pomp in the family vault; and his title being extinct, the whole of his vaſt poſſeſſions devolved to his long-ſuffering *Ducheſs*.—After three months had elapſed, the *Lord Caernarvon* ventured

ventured to hint his reſpectful hopes, and aided by the friendly wiſhes of *Sir James* and *Lady Thorald*, he received the joyful promiſe from his adored *Elinor*, that ſhe would give him her hand, after the expiration of her mourning: To ſuch a promiſe he liſtened with rapture; and when the tedious time was at length worn out, he received her long-looked-for hand, from that of *Sir James*, and her delighted *Mother*.

THE

DELUSIONS OF THE HEART.

Celeſtial *Happineſs*, when e'er ſhe ſtoops
To viſit earth, one ſhrine the goddeſs finds,
And one alone to make her ſweet amends
For abſent Heaven.—The boſom of a friend,
Where heart meets heart, reciprocally ſoft,
Each other's pillow to repoſe divine! YOUNG.

MIRANDA was born of parents, whoſe fortune and rank in *England*, obliged them to mix too much with the gay and diſſipated. Her own *mother* died, when ſhe was but an infant: her *father*, ſhortly after, was married to a *Lady* of beauty and diſtinction. *Lady Hundſon* her *Mother-in-law*, had juſt attained that time of life, when youth, blending with age, produces a certain majeſty, that perhaps is as pleaſing as the ſoftneſs of tenderer years: She was four and thirty, of a tall ſtature, a graceful eaſe in her ſhape that was irreſiſtible; her features were formed with a bold ſymmetry; and her eyes which were large, full, and dark, ſhot glances keen as lightning. With a figure ſo formed, it was impoſſible ſhe ſhould have reached ſuch an age, without hearing that figure extolled above any *Goddeſs*, that the moſt rapturous ſculptor had ever carved. Certain it was, that as her education had been princi-

pally in the *grande monde*, her notions of female charms were confined alone to the body; and as nature had ſo laviſhly endowed her, ſhe made no ſcruple of ſecuring as many hearts as ſhe could allure; although her attractions were upon the wane, and her hand the property of a deſerving *huſband*.

Miranda her *daughter-in-law*, was whatever the moſt brilliant fancy could conceive: Nature ſeemed as though ſhe had intended to convince mankind, that it was in her power to form a perfect beauty: The ſlighteſt part of her body was ſhaped with an exquiſite exactneſs: her breath was the richeſt zephyr from a bed of violets; and her complexion was the univerſal glow of the creation; every wandering tint collected together in glowing aſſemblage, and ſhining through her tranſparent ſkin, formed a colouring, which no pencil but that of the *Great Artiſt*, could produce: Her limbs were delicacy itſelf, and the general expreſſion of her figure and face, was feminine ſweetneſs, angelic purity, and manly ſenſe, The beauty of her form was in harmony with the lovelineſs of her mind; where a brilliant imagination gathered freſh animation from an extenſive knowledge, and a ſenſibility that ſoftened all her manners: To this ſhe added a ſublimity of ſoul, an unbounded candour and generoſity, purified by the moſt rational and ardent devotion.

Such

Such a being was *Miranda Hundſon*, at the age of eighteen. Solitude was *her* greateſt deſire, and faſhionable life her *mother's*; who appearing to give up to her *daughter's* inclinations, permitted her to abſent herſelf from the giddy circles whenever ſhe pleaſed: To the eye of *Lord Hundſdon*, (whoſe characteriſtic was eaſy good nature,) it ſeemed indulgence in his *wife*; who, in reality allowed it, from no other motive, than the apprehenſion of his child's commencing her rival, and thinking it more to her advantage to bury ſuch attractions in obſcurity, ſhe rather encouraged, than repreſſed her ardent love of the ſilent pleaſures of Nature.—In ſhort, this thoughtleſs woman, had no more than a habitual regard for a *daughter*, whoſe worth made her be adored by every one elſe. His *Lordſhip* loved her above all the world, his *wife* excepted.—Would to Heaven he had loved her even above her!—But giving up to the ſtrong power of his *Lady*, he was often obliged to quit his old *manſion*, for the *capital*; and while he was running the glittering maze of licentious revelry with his *partner*, the mild *Miranda* was penſively ſtraying amid the romantic and ſublime beauties of *Hundſon Caſtle*.

As her ideas were rich and exalted; ſhe delighted in that ſort of reading which was congenial with the purity of her own mind: The moſt celebrated *Poems* and *Romances* were ever in her hand; amongſt the latter, *Sir Philip Sydney's*

Sydney's Arcadia, held the diſtinguiſhed place. Secluded as ſhe was from the world, ſhe formed an imaginary one of her own, ſtill more refined than that in her favorite *authors*. She conſidered, that as every thing is in a ſtate of improvement, *it* muſt alſo advance in excellence, little dreaming, that this earth, contrary to all other things, degenerates every day from that unſullied innocence of heart and manners, which prevailed in the early years of our firſt fathers. In the creation of her brain, *vice* was a monſter ſeldom beheld, againſt which the whole community of the *good* were armed to deſtroy. Such was the ſtate of her ideas, when her parents arrived from the *Capital* to ſpend the ſummer at the *Caſtle*.

Lady Hundſon brought a numerous retinue of fluttering coxcombs, and inſolent fellows, who were in faſhion, to adorn her triumph in the *Country*; among which, were thinly ſtrewn, a few men of ſenſe and diſcernment, who had been invited from *politeneſs* by her; and from a ſincere eſteem by her *Lord*. In this number, was a younger ſon of an ancient, though not now affluent family: He was no leſs diſtinguiſhed for the elegance of his manners and figure, than for the knowledge with which his mind was ſtored.—*Eſſex Plantagenet* was three and twenty, joining to a graceful figure, an *Agamemnon's* dignity: His features were perfectly beautiful, animated by the fire of youth, and the benignity of enthuſiaſtic philanthropy:

His

His eyes were dark and radiant, full of ardent expreſſion, tempered with ſweet complacency; his manners were replete with urbanity and gentleneſs; his converſation was refined, poetical and elegant.—The charms of his perſon and of his behaviour, had ſunk deep into the heart of *Lady Hunſdon*; unconſciouſly he held the firſt place there. Being in love with him; another conſideration ſtimulated her to the deſign of making a conqueſt of him; ſhe ſuppoſed, that the adding ſuch a *lover* to her train, who joined the *informed* to the poliſhed man, would, beſides gratifying her own wiſhes, render her the envy of the women, and the purſuit of the men. *Plantagenet* was ſo far from being captivated by *her* charms, that he abſented himſelf from her company whenever he could with good breeding; and then, with a book in his hand, would ſtroll through the walks of a gloomy foreſt, which enveloped the *Caſtle*.

In theſe walks he often met with *Miranda*, whom he joined, and purſuing with her his walk, would enter into diſcourſe, which by degrees unfolded the beauty of his fair companion's mind: Diſcovering her diſpoſition, he with rapture expreſſed congenial ſentiments: He joined with her in the opinion, that the tendereſt friendſhip could ſubſiſt betwixt perſons of different ſexes, without one particle of love mingling with it: He owned to *Miranda*, that his heart ſprang towards her, with a powerful ſympathy. The beautiful innocent, whoſe breaſt

breaſt was the treaſury of every warm and generous virtue; candidly told him, it had been long her wiſht o poſſeſs a ſincere friend; and as in him ſhe now found every requiſite qualification, ſhe ſhould make no ſcruple of repoſing any of her diſquietudes in his boſom. After that moment they were ſeldom ſeparate. The charms of *Hunſdon Caſtle*, were a never-failing ſource of admiration to both.

The antique remains of a ruined *Abbey*, that formed a principal object in their views, was the place allotted for their meeting every cool evening; where from the twilight, until the moon ſilvered the heavens, *Plantagenet*, with the arm of *Miranda* locked in his, would wander amid the fragments of mouldering monuments, which had once decorated the ſpot, where lay the corſe of *beauty* or of *courage*.

Lady Hunſdon was for ſome time a ſtranger to theſe nocturnal pleaſures; and had for ever remained ſo, but from the artleſs candour of her *daughter*, who conceiving that no breaſt was inſenſible to the charms which enraptured hers, entreated her *mother* to become one of the party with her and *Eſſex*. Her *Ladyſhip* was enflamed with rage, and ſtung at the idea of *her* not being powerful enough to gain a youth, whom ſhe imagined *Miranda* had ſubdued, from that moment delivered up her heart to all the horrors of jealouſy and revenge. *Miranda*, far from diſcovering the ſentiments of her *mother*, regretted with unfeigned ſorrow, that

that ſhe ſhould loſe the moſt refined bliſs, for the ſake of her viſitants, (the reaſon which *Lady Hunſdon* had given for not aſſenting to her wiſh,) but hoped when they quitted the *Caſtle*, her *mother*, then at liberty might participate in her happineſs.

Plantagenet and Miſs *Hunſdon*, ſtill continued their walks. One evening *Eſſex* being longer in his ſtay than uſual; *Miranda* who was waiting for him in the broken cloiſter of the abbey, took out her pencil and wrote the following ſonnet, as the ideas fled acroſs her fancy.

ADDRESS TO TWILIGHT.

How pleaſing Twilight are thy ſoftening ſhades,
  Which blends the diſtant proſpect with the near.
Whoſe glimmering gloom the mould'ring tomb pervades;
  The tomb that calls the ſentimental tear.

See riſing Cynthia, 'mid her tending maids,
  Above yon hoar-cliff, ſlow her beauties rear!
Before her ſilver light, thy ſoftneſs fades,
  Sweet light that ſtreams upon each marble bier!

Beneath whoſe weight, perchance there lies a part
  Of one, who falling in the bloom of youth,
(How great the pang which e'er could rend a heart!)
  For whom ſad monument of ſpotleſs truth;

His miſtreſs, reckleſs of her blooming charms,
Sunk on his grave, intwined in deaths cold arms.

She had ſcarcely finiſhed, when the tread of *Plantagenet* ſounded in her ears: ſhe raiſed up her beautiful blue eyes, which were ſwimming in tears of ſenſibility. *Eſſex* alarmed, approached her.—"Are you weeping my dear *Miranda?*

"repoſe

" repoſe in the faithful breaſt of your *Plantage-*
" *net*, every painful ſenſation! What will give
" *you* relief, will be a pleaſure, though a me-
" lancholy one to me."—" Do not alarm your-
" ſelf my dear friend! (replied *Miranda*,) I
" have no ſorrow to draw theſe tears; my *fancy*
" alone has done it: Theſe reflections are the
" fountain from whence they flow,"—added
ſhe, preſenting the paper to him. When he had peruſed it, he ſat down beſide her, and taking her hand, he held it faſt in his for ſome moments,—" Are theſe *your* reflections *Miranda*?" ſaid he, raiſing up his large dark eyes, beaming with animation, and heaving a ſigh, that appeared half repreſſed.—" Do you in reality be-
" lieve, that the heart of a female would break
" over the grave of her lover?"—" Yes, I do
" believe it indeed," returned the beautiful creature, with earneſtneſs—" And do you
" think, (aſked *Eſſex*, in a heſitating voice)
" that a heart could break over the tomb of
" a friend?—I feel that *mine* would burſt on
" *yours*—and if *friendſhip* is not capable of ſuch
" ſtrong emotions—what is it then?"—He ſtarted as he pronounced this, and ſpringing up, quitted her hand, and ſhot through the cloiſter.—*What is it then?* ſtill rung in the ears of the agitated *Miranda*. A thouſand times ſhe aſked herſelf the queſtion; and as often checked the riſing ideas which drowned her diſturbed ſenſes---" It is *friendſhip* ſurely!" (at laſt ſhe replied,) " I feel that *friendſhip is*
" capable

" capable of ſuch exquiſite emotion; for *my* " heart at this inſtant, is ſuſceptible of every " agony, which appears to wring *that* of my " beloved *Plantagenet*."—Satisfied with this, ſhe purſued her walk, in hopes of meeting him, but in vain; at laſt ſhe diſcovered his figure, beneath the ſhelter of a projecting cliff, that ſwelled from the ſide of the mountain: " *Eſſex*." cried ſhe, in the higheſt note of her melodious voice. He ſtarted at the ſound, and riſing, fled among the thick trees of the foreſt.— " Cruel friend!" exclaimed ſhe, in the bittereſt diſappointment;—" If love is to baniſh friendly " kindneſs from the human heart, why did I " ever liſten to his divine raptures, which " breathed more than mortal animation?— " Platonic regard is now no where, but in the " breaſt of the rejected *Miranda*."---Venting her feelings in a thouſand exclamations, mingled with tears, and the heavieſt ſighs, ſhe at laſt reached the *Caſtle*; and retiring to her chamber, ſpent the night in ſleepleſs anxiety, or in feveriſh ſlumber.

The ſun roſe in all its radiance, but to the tear-wet eyes of *Miranda*, all his glories were hateful; her ſoul thirſted for the dewy evening, and the light of the moon, when the converſe of *Plantagenet*, ſhe hoped would return to its former calm regard. Theſe ideas ſhe was not ſuffered long to indulge. When ſhe was buſy in robing herſelf for the day, one of her ſervants brought her a letter; on breaking open

the ſeal ſhe diſcovered the ſignature of *Plantagenet*; eagerly peruſing it, ſhe found it contained theſe words:

" Adored Miranda!

" THE charm is now diſſolved, and I " am reſtored to my ſenſes. I have cheated " myſelf with an illuſion which has deſtroy- " ed me. A heart formed of colder materials " than that of the unhappy *Plantagenet*, " might have beheld you with the coldneſs " of Platonic eſteem; but it was vain to " hope it from mine. The one queſtion that I " aſked myſelf has undeceived me---has " awakened me from a ſweet delirium, into " which the ſyren ſweetneſs of your charms had " lulled me. You *eſteem* me; but it may be " fated that your heart ſhall throb with *love* for " ſome luckier youth.---Ah, *Miranda*! think " with a ſigh on the paſſions which now whirl " my brain to phrenzy; at preſent thy gentle " nature can conceive none of its fury.--- " Adieu! I fly you for your repoſe.---I yet " retain enough of purity in my deſires, to " prefer your happineſs to that of the wretched

" *Eſſex Plantagenet*."

Miranda, with a voice that faultered with her attempts to check the thickening ſobs, eagerly enquired of the ſervant, if *Plantagenet* was at *Hunſdon*: he anſwered that he had left it before day-break, after wandering all night through the foreſt. *Miranda* haſtily fled towards the

the Abbey, and flinging herſelf down upon one of the tombs, gave vent to the feelings which ſhe had ſo long reſtrained.--" Ah, *Eſſex!*" cried " ſhe,) " are you then unhappy, and I the " cauſe?---Would to Heaven the dear deluſion " had for ever continued! *Miranda* and *Plan-* " *tagenet* had then been bleſt!---Does he think " *my* heart fated to throb for another! Oh! " No, no, it can *never* feel greater agonies " than now."---A glimmering of truth ſhot acroſs her mind.---" And do *I* love too?" exclaimed ſhe, in wild amaze.----" Is it poſſible " that *I* alſo have been deceived?---If it is to " prize the happineſs of another more than " your own? to doat on every accent that his " lips utter? to think, to talk, to wiſh for no- " thing elſe than him?—*I love*—certain I do— " could I be content and be united to another? " ---Could I be unhappy and his *wife?*—No, " we both *love*; and with an ardour unſpeak- " able!"---From that inſtant, ſhe delivered herſelf up to the moſt paſſionate warmth.

The Cloiſter, where for ſo many nights they had taſted the pureſt pleaſure, was now idolized with fervid adoration: The huge cliff, where ſhe had taken her laſt view of him, became an object no leſs adored: She would carve his name in its chalky boſom, and weep over it when it was finiſhed. Love cheriſhed by ſolitude, and memory burnt up her ſoul; ſhe pined for the return of *Plantagenet*, a return for which ſhe dared hardly hope.

While

While her mind was in this perturbed ſtate, a *Captain William Bentinck* arrived at *Hunſdon Caſtle*. He was a man of an exalted mind: A heart full of ſenſibility; and an appearance peculiarly pleaſing The ſoftneſs of his manners bore ſo ſtrong a reſemblance to *Plantagenet*, that *Miranda's* heart bending down with the weight of ſorrow that oppreſſed it, clung to him with a more than common regard. She found in *Bentinck* all the ſoul ſhe wiſhed for in a friend---She ſighed to herſelf, and thought, as ſhe gazed upon him ---" I will not deceive " myſelf again---I have a pure, a Platonic re- " gard for *William Bentinck*."---*Miranda* herſelf, was too gentle, too lovely, too intereſting a character to paſs unnoticed by one of the young officer's ſentimental mind: He ſought every opportunity of cultivating a friendſhip, which, with her, he would conſider as the ſweeteſt pleaſure upon earth.

His delicate attentions, his brotherly affection, and often hinted wiſhes, at length won ſo far upon the ſoul of *Miranda*, that ſhe accepted him as a friend---her heart had long before nominated her his. From that hour he attached himſelf principally to her, and continually accompanied her in his rambles.

One ſtill evening, while the ſun was ſetting, they had ſtrayed to the foot of the adored cliff; and ſeating themſelves beneath it, *Bentinck* began to expatiate on the charms of the declining orb; finding his ſpirited encomium not replied

plied to, or obſerved by his companion, he turned towards her, and beheld her holding a paper in her hand, while her eyes rained down a torrent of tears.—"*Miranda!*" exclaimed he; ſhe raiſed her head, and recollecting ſhe was beheld, hid her face haſtily with both her hands "Allow me the privilege of friendſhip?"—ſaid *Bentinck*, taking up the paper ſhe had dropt—*Miranda* replied only by a loud ſob—he opened it, and read, written apparently in a diſordered hand, theſe lines to *Miranda*.

O! my Miranda, if the woes,
Of Eſſex wound thy lov'd repoſe,
Ah! baniſh from thy virgin breaſt
Ought that diſturbs that boſom's reſt;
But O! beneath the lowering ſky,
Sleepleſs and ſad, uncouched I lie
Frantic, thy name I oft repeat,
And kiſs the printings of thy feet.
In vain for eaſe, for peace I rave,
Peace can be mine but in the grave;
O! my Miranda! when this heart
Shall beat no more, and ceaſe to ſmart,
When ſtretch'd in death, this form is laid,
When my laſt mournful couch is made
Amid the flowers that deck my bier,
Say, will *you* ſhed one woe-fraught tear?
Ah! come then death, and ceaſe this ſtrife,
O! end his grief, with Eſſex's life.

Bentinck turned pale, and ſpeechleſs, gazed upon the reclined head of *Miranda*, who firſt broke ſilence, by ſaying with a tremulous accent, "now my friend you ſee the extent of my "wretchedneſs; I am loved by one who be-

"lieves

" lieves that I hate him, and flies my preſence,
" becauſe my eyes were not ſo ſoon opened as
" his were,—O! *Plantagenet!* beneath the
" ſhade of thoſe trees which crown this cliff,
" and whoſe wind-toſſed boughs conſigned this
" treaſure to my hands, did *you* alas! did *you*
" ſpend that laſt wretched night? did not my
" heart appear to thee, cold and inſenſible? Ah!
" it was too ſuſceptible for its own peace!"—

Bentinck, during theſe incoherent expreſſions, ſat ſilent, at laſt he aſked her the cauſe of ſuch myſterious Behaviour: twilight had obſcured the ſky, and the perturbed beauty gathering courage from its gloom, ventured in broken accents, to diſcloſe the whole narrative of *Plantagenet's* ill-ſtarred paſſion. *Bentinck* replied in the ſofteſt blandiſhments of friendly condolence, and faithfully promiſed to invent ſome means whereby *Eſſex* might be brought to return to *Hunſdon Caſtle*. In the mean time *Lady Hunſdon* was planning ſchemes for the deſtruction of her too innocent child. The ſudden departure of *Eſſex Plantagenet*, had alarmed her, and ſetting her imagination to work, ſhe fancied that it could be for no other reaſon, than to prepare every thing for the carrying off of *Miranda*. Full of this idea, ſhe ſought her *huſband*, and aſſuming the utmoſt appearance of maternal fondneſs, began a long diſcourſe, wherein ſhe repreſented the beauties and virtues of his *Daughter* in the ſtrongeſt light; expreſſing the fervour with which ſhe *had* hoped to behold her united

united to ſome one, whoſe rank and *fortune*, might not only be equal but ſuperior to her own; and then with the tears of a crocodile, and faultering voice, concluded with ſaying; "ſuch joys were never for her; as ſhe ſaw too plainly, that the affections of his child were caſt away upon *Eſſex Plantagenet*; he whom neither his ſtation in life, or character, could entitle to ſuch a preference." His *Lordſhip* alarmed, tenderly conjured her to give him an account of the proofs which had convinced or ſtaggered her. After many earneſt entreaties, ſhe complied with his requeſt; bidding him call to mind, their frequent meetings in the lonelineſs of night; their being never happy but when together; and laſtly the abrupt departure of *Eſſex*, which ſhe was certain was only done to facilitate the execution of their plan of eloping.

All theſe circumſtances corroborating together, worked in the mind of his *Lordſhip*, (whoſe temper reſembled the tempeſt, that which is the longeſt of brewing, is always the moſt formidable) and raiſed ſuch a commotion, that burſting out into a perfect hurricane, he ordered his *Daughter* to appear before him. She was ſought for, and obeying his mandates, as ſhe always did, with pleaſure; entered the apartment to behold him darting flames from his eyes, and fury from his lips.—"Ungrateful wretch" cried he, as ſhe came forward, "Is this the re-"turn of all my fondneſs? does thy viperiſh "heart baſely, and cunningly contrive with the

" calm malice of a demon, what will be the
" means of ſhortening my exiſtence? Have I
" not a thouſand times, expreſſed my hopes of
" ſeeing you united to a *ſplendid* and *powerful*
" Houſe? And wilt thou wantonly cruſh all
" my projects, by flying with a pauper, a *Plan-*
" *tagenet?*—But, if thou doſt, the heavieſt
" curſe, a parent's aching and incenſed heart
" can forge, light on thy diſobedient head!
" here in the face of heaven, I denounce, and
" breathe the deepeſt execrations upon thee, if
" ever"—" Oh ſtay my *Father!* my ever-re-
" vered *Father!*" cried the horror-ſtruck *In-*
" *nocent*, ſinking at his feet.—" Oh! do not
" breathe curſes upon one, who never ſwerved
" in thought, nor deed, from her duty! hear
" me!"—" I will not, (interrupted her *Father*)
" I will not, leſt you add to your guilt, that of
" deceiving me,—you are going to elope with
" *Plantagenet*—I know it,"—" By my every
" hope of future ſalvation," (exclaimed *Miranda*
with ſtreaming eyes,) " I never once har-
" boured ſuch a thought!"—" wretched crea-
" ture!" cried her *Father*, breaking from her
eager graſp—" I behold you with horror! have
" I a child, ſo loſt to every ſenſe of virtue!—
" away from my ſight, and I charge you—if yet
" you dread a parent's curſe, never to appear
" before me again."—As he ſaid it he flew
from her, followed by his *Lady*,—" *Mother!*
" my compaſſionate *Mother*" ſobbed out *Mi-*
randa,—" your tender heart will liſten to the
" atteſtations

" atteſtations of my Innocence—you too will " not curſe a child, who loves you more than " all the world!"—" loſt creature!" was all ſhe uttered as ſhe diſengaged herſelf from her clinging arms, and ruſhed out of the room.

Miranda raiſed herſelf from the ground, and ſtaring wildly about her, ſeemed to regard every thing that had paſſed, as a viſion: at laſt awakening from her ſtupor, ſhe exclaimed—" I am a wretch indeed!—a friendleſs fa- " therleſs wretch!—my *Mother!* O! my " *Father*, *never* more to behold *you!*—whither " ſhall I go?—who will receive a guilty crea- " ture, whoſe touch is pollution, and who is la- " bouring beneath theweight of a parent's male- " diction?—but, I *will* fly this face, *once* loved " ſhall never obtrude itſelf, to diſturb their " peace.—And while *I* am ſinking under the " oppreſſion of want and miſery—O! may the " heart of my *Father*, never experience one re- " proachful pang!"—a ſhower of tears ſtopped her utterance, and ſeeking her own apartment, ſhe penned a haſty letter to *William Bentinck*, acquainting him with the proceeding ſcene—her determination to leave *Hunſdon*—and requeſting him to aſſiſt her, in her reſolves. This ſhe ſent by her own maid, who delivered it to *Bentinck*, juſt as he was entering from a walk.—The moment he had read it, he flew to her apartment, and found her in all the agonies of grief, which he kindly endeavoured to ſoothe, by aſſuring her, of his conſtant and unſhakeable

friendſhip. *Miranda* could only thank him by her tears, and all that ſhe could utter, was—"O! let us fly *William!* let us leave this ſtill "dear habitation!"—"Firſt allow me to in-"tercede with his *Lordſhip*,—where will you "fly to, my dear *Miranda?*"—"to any place "wherever you will take me, for I am too ſen-"ſible, that my *Father* is inexorable"—*Bentinck*, aſked if ſhe was ready to go that inſtant? and being anſwered in the affirmative, they quitted the *Caſtle*: *Miranda* taking along with her, nothing but two miniatures, one of her *Father*, the other of his wife. When herſelf and companion, had reached the top of an eminence from whence ſhe could take her laſt view of *Hunſdon* ſhe turned her eyes ſorrowfully towards it, and exclaimed in the bitterneſs of her heart—"Dear and ever beloved walks! from "my earlieſt infancy until now, ſay, did I "ever wander beneath your ſhades with a guil-"ty heart? were you ever witneſs to other "vows, than thoſe of friendſhip, between *Mi-*"*randa* and *Plantagenet?* O! *Eſſex! Eſſex!* "where art thou now?"—It was in vain that *Bentinck* tried to ſoothe the anguiſh of her boſom: ſhe wept inceſſantly, until reaching the town they ſought for, ſhame obliged her to wipe away the ſtreaming tears, leſt the prying eye of curioſity, ſhould diſturb her with its impertinence.

Bentinck procured a Poſt-chaiſe, and ſeating her, and a truſty female ſervant, (who was recommended

commended to her, by the Landlady of the Inn, (for, from prudence, they had agreed that he ſhould not accompany her;) he gave orders for the Poſt-boy to drive to *Holyhead*, from whence ſhe intended to take ſhipping for *Ireland*, as they had ſettled that to be the place of her retirement. *Miranda* graſped his hand, and ſhedding a torrent of tears over it, half frantic, bid him aſſure her *Father* of her moſt dutiful love; and then recollecting herſelf, exclaimed—"Oh! "no no! ſuch an aſſurance he will not believe. "Adieu! adieu! *William!* If you ever ſee "*Plantagenet*, never pain his too tender heart, "by reminding him of the fate of *Miranda* "*Hunſdon*".—*Bentinck's* eyes gliſtened with manly tears, he preſſed her hand in ſilence; and giving her a Pocket-book, wherein he had before told her, was his *addreſs*; quitted the chaiſe. *Miranda* ſunk back on the ſeat in ſpeechleſs agony: every tender idea recurred to her mind: Her *Father's* once doting love; her happineſs; *Plantagenet's* enrapturing converſation; and the delicate friendſhip of *William Bentinck*; all ruſhed upon her with ſuch violence, that unable to bear the recollection, ſhe burſt into a flood of tears, and remained half her journey ſenſeleſs with her woes. The next morning ſhe arrived at her place of deſtination, and the *Packet* luckily being ready to ſail, ſhe took her place, and removed into it. There, on opening her pocket-book, ſhe found that the generous *Bentinck* had incloſed a ſhort letter to her,

her, begging her to accept, what he took the liberty of preſenting: a note for one hundred pounds, and entreating, that upon any neceſſity ſhe would apply to him for more; concluding with reſpectfully requeſting that ſhe would write to him, and addreſs her letters to his *Father's* houſe.

It is needleſs to ſay, how the refined ſoul of *Miranda* felt on this occaſion: A melancholy pleaſure cheered her breaſt, but it was only momentary; all the horrors of her ſituation recurred to her momory; and ſhe prayed with the humbleſt ſubmiſſion, that her Heavenly Father would releaſe her from a life, where her portion appeared to be the bittereſt miſery.

The *Packet*, with a fair wind reached *Ireland*. In a few hours ſhe landed, and taking a coach, drove to *Dublin*, where tired with fatigue, ſhe procured a bed at the Inn, and retired to ſleep. Sleep! which alone freed her from the remembrance of her wretchedneſs. In the morning, upon her riſing, ſhe begged the landlady would hire for her a comfortable lodging, and ſhe would reward her for the trouble. Which being done in a genteel retired ſtreet, ſhe took up her abode, alone without a friend, to comfort her drooping ſpirits. How different from thoſe peaceful pleaſures, which ſhe had enjoyed at *Hunſdon Caſtle!*

Here, to augment her misfortunes, the ſervant whom ſhe had brought with her from *England*, became acquainted with a needy villain,

lain, who, under the appearance of a *Gentleman*, preyed upon the fortunes of others. He profeſſed an ardent aad diſintereſted love for the girl; who, wild for the title of a *gentleman's* wife, and dazzled by the happy ſplendour that ſeemed attached to it, met him half way in all his advances. After firſt making himſelf ſure of her heart, he began to interrogate her concerning the property of her miſtreſs; and he ſoon heard, that ſhe poſſeſſed a conſiderable ſum of money, which ſhe kept depoſited in her pocket-book. The maid had conceived it to be far more than it really was; and allured by the ſpecious inſinuations of her villainous lover, who laid before her the impoſſibility of marrying her without any fortune; "not but that po-"verty *with her* would be a happineſs;" yet his relations would diſcard him for ever, and take from him the only means he had of making life comfortable: Were it but *two thouſand pounds*, it would have a better appearance than *nothing*, and might be forgiven. Deceived by theſe hints, ſhe came to the reſolution of robbing her miſtreſs. She did ſo, when ſhe was aſleep; and bore off to her lover the money and the direction to *Captain Bentinck*.

It was not long before *Miranda* became conſcious of her wretchedneſs. The girl's precipitate departure alarmed her, and looking for her pocket-book, her fears were confirmed; it was gone. She poſſeſſed only five guineas in the world: To *Bentick* ſhe could not apply, ſhe

knew not where to direct; and if ſhe did, ſhe could not be capable of ſuch ſhameleſs avidity. She came to the determination of inſtantly quitting the place ſhe then reſided in, and of retiring to a cheaper and more ſecluded ſpot.

Agreeable to this reſolve, ſhe bade adieu to *Dublin*, and with a ſmall bundle in her hand, wandered into its environs, unknowing whither ſhe ſtrayed. At laſt finding herſelf wearied and faint, ſhe entered a little neat cabin, and humbly enquired, if they could let her have a ſingle room, for which ſhe would thankfully pay. The woman replied in the affirmative, and ſhewed her a ſmall, very ſmall room, which ſhe was to have at a moderate rate. Here *Miranda* took up her abode, and ſpent day after day, week after week, in fruitleſs lamentations, which by degrees wore her delicate frame almoſt to a ſhadow.

One day, as ſhe was ſtraying through the romantic walks of the *Dargle*; her attention was arreſted by hearing a voice, in accents low and tremulous, utter theſe words:—"Does Heaven "canopy a wretch ſo miſerable as I am?—Ah! "No, *adverſity* has not a pang ſo exquiſite, "as is the leaſt of mine.—Fortune! that for- "tune for which I ſo earneſtly prayed, is ren- "dered but to make me the more miſerable.— "O! I could cavern me in the remoteſt point "of the globe, and wear out an exiſtence that "is anguiſh itſelf."—"*Miranda!—Miranda!* "—*Miranda!*" echoed *Miſs Hunſdon* in a loud

loud ſhriek, that led the ſpeaker to her; who in a moment, held her in his arms.—" *Plan-*
" *tagenet!*"—" *Miranda!*" was all they could utter. She beheld *Plantagenet*, but Oh! how changed! His eyes ſtill preſerved their luſtre; but it was the eager brilliancy of phrenzy: His beautiful brown hair, was hanging down his back in wild diſorder, and his whole figure expreſſed grief, almoſt deſpair. Recovered from the firſt emotions of diſtracted joy, *Miſs Hunſdon* related the progreſs of her misfortunes; and intreated him to inform her what had been *his* fate ſince the fatal moment of ſeparation.

" When I left you (ſaid he) I paſſed the re-
" mainder of the night in diſtraction, not
" knowing whither I ſhould go; it rent my
" heart the thought of leaving you; but for
" your peace of mind, I at laſt determined to
" ſet off for *Sedgethorp*, (the *ſeat* of a diſtant
" relation,) as it was the fartheſt from the
" *County* that contained *you*. Here my relation,
" who was upon a ſick bed, treated me with
" the greateſt love: He bleſſed the chance that
" had ſent me to cloſe his eyes. I remained
" with him ſome weeks; at laſt Heaven took
" him to itſelf; and how was I ſurprized,
" when I found that he had left *me* ſole heir to
" his *Eſtate*; an *Eſtate* of ſix thouſand a year.
" All my dreams of poſſeſſing my *Miranda* re-
" curred to my mind: I wiſhed, I hoped, that
" you loved me; and then my want of fortune
" could no longer be the bar to my happineſs.

" I ſet

" I ſet off for the *Caſtle*, a fortnight after the " interment of my benefactor: There I was " received with aſtoniſhment, almoſt amount- " ing to rudeneſs, His *Lordſhip* taxed me, " with the baſe deſign of ſtealing away his " *daughter*; and ſaid, he was certain ſhe had " fled to my protection. I ſolemnly denied " every article, and by the diſtraction that was " viſible in my behaviour, when I was told of " your departure; I ſtaggered his belief, and " he curſed his credulity and cruelty a thouſand " times, which had led him to treat a worthy " child in ſo barbarous a manner. In the mean " while, his *wife*, unhappy woman! having " been accuſed by *Lord Hunſdon* in one of his " furious moments, of alienating his affecti- " ons from you; flung herſelf into ſo violent " a rage in denying the charge, that her reaſon " forſook her—Avenging Heaven! how juſt " are thy ways!—And ſhe laid open the whole " of a *heart*, wicked from the weakneſs of " her *head*."

Here he was interrupted by the ſobs of his fair auditor; who hid her face with one hand, and ſhed a torrent of tears. He would have ſtopt; but at her repeated aſſurances, of its not affecting her to an injury, he proceeded thus:

" *Lord Hunſdon*, convinced of mine, and " your innocence," (for ſhe confeſſed that the whole of her conduct was actuated by piqued pride and rejected love,) " gave way to the " wildeſt phrenzy: he advertiſed for you;

" he

" he ſent people to ſearch; and at laſt meeting " with *Captain Bentinck*, he told all that you " know; but expreſſed his fears of your ſafety, " from your never having written to him. " Finding that your deſtination was *Dublin*, I " flew to *Ireland*; I ſought every where; I " paſſed ſleepleſs nights, and fatiguing days, " in ſearch of my dear, my idolized *Miranda*. " I was wandering in theſe walks, determined " to ſeek in every houſe, to enquire of every " one for ſome intelligence of you, when the " well known echo of your ſeraphic voice, " called me to joy unutterable."

He ceaſed, and gazing ardently on her pallid features, gave her an impaſſioned though delicate preſſure to his faithful boſom. " *Plan-* " *tagenet!*" ſaid *Miranda*, raiſing up her ſtreaming eyes,—" Where is my beloved *father?* " Where my unhappy *mother-in-law?*"— " Safe! Safe, my ever-adored maid; ſafe in " *Hunſdon-Caſtle*. I prevailed on *him* to re- " main there, while *I* ſought for the dear exile. " A ſearch which a merciful God has ren- " dered ſo propitious!"

Miſs Hunſdon's ſoul was filled with the moſt oppoſite ſenſations; the mildeſt bliſs ſparkled in her eye, when ſhe thought on *Plantagenet's* love, and her *father's* being reſtored to her: but a fluid ſwam over its radiance, as her pained heart dwelt on the image of his *wife's* guilt and puniſhment, With ſuch ſenſations ſhe could not ſpeak much; therefore returned with

with *Effex* to her miſerable apartment, whoſe manly cheek glittered with a tender tear, when he contemplated the poverty of ſuch an abode, for her, whoſe life had before been ſpent in the ſplendid palaces of the *great*. Here *Miranda*, who burnt to behold a *father* whom ſhe ſo ardently loved, prepared every thing for her departure; and *Plantagenet* after writing a ſhort account of their meeting to *Lord Hunſdon*, got a chaiſe for their conveyance. They entered it, and drove with the greateſt rapidity towards the *ſea-port*. There they embarked, and a few hours landed them in *England*, where, again they took coach, and were at the entrance of *Hunſdon*.

Let that mind, which is "tremblingly alive" to every animated ſentiment, conceive the feelings, which thrilled the agitated ſoul of *Miſs Hunſdon*. She trembled, ſhe felt a chill, a cold dew ſteal over her frame, ſucceeded by a feveriſh glow: Her heart ſeemed to make a ſtop within her boſom, when they reached the gate of the *Caſtle*, ſhe ſcarce reſpired, a convulſive tremor ſhook every limb, and her heart beat again with furious violence. Her *father* at the ſound of wheels, flew to the gates, they were opened, and in a moment he was in her arms. "*Miranda!* My child, my child!" She ſhrieked out, and his fatherly breaſt was preſſed only by a lifeleſs form. The blood fled from his cheek *Plantagenet* half frantic ſnatched her hand, ſqueezed it with ſuch force of agonized

nized love, that ſhe awoke: ſhe flung her arms around the neck of her overjoyed *Parent*, and diſcharged the emotions of her loaded heart, in copious ſhowers of tears. Recovered from the tranſports of this meeting, ſhe was led into the *caſtle*, where ſhe beheld the generous *William Bentinck*, who ſaluted her with the warmth of friendſhip: *Eſſex* embraced him, and called him his benefactor, the preſerver of his *Miranda*; and a thouſand other epithets, which diſplayed how ſtrong was the love, that animated his boſom. *Miranda* enquired for her *Mother-in-law*; his *Lordſhip's* eyes gliſtened with the tear of compaſſion, and affliction. *Miranda*, caſt her watry glance upon his ſable garments, and advancing to a window, covered her face with a handkerchief. The apartment was in ſolemn ſilence; it was the pauſe of woe; and a tribute to the memory of an unhappy woman, whoſe crimes were not deep enough to render the recollection of her image, a ſenſation of horror. This moment of bitter anguiſh over, *Miranda* dried up every tear, and aſſuming the ſweeteſt ſerenity, ſoothed the bleeding heart of her beloved *father*.

Eſſex gave up his whole ſoul to the higheſt exceſs of joy, and a few weeks ſo ſoftened the diſtreſs of *Lord Hunſdon*, and his enchanting *daughter*, that *Plantagenet* received with tranſport, as a reward for his conſtancy, the hand of *Miranda*, at the ſacred foot of the altar.

A

TOUR TO THE LAKES.

The baſhful look, the riſing breaſt,
Alternate ſpread alarms,
The lovely ſtranger ſtands confeſt
A maid in all her charms. GOLDSMITH.

IN a romantic Village, amid the unpoliſhed clowns of Northumberland, lived *Mr. Sydney* and his little family. He had been an officer in the Engliſh army; and his dawning fortune, opened with many fair proſpects, but marrying early in life to a woman of no pecuniary rank, he forfeited the affections of an Uncle on whom his chief dependence hung, who withdrew from him an income of five hundred a year, and left his nephew to ſtruggle through the world, with the pay of a Lieutenant's commiſſion, and the trifling ſum of an hundred pounds annually. *Mr. Sydney* found his family yearly increaſe, and before he was five and twenty, (an age at which moſt men are revelling in eaſe and affluence,) he, was worn with care, combatting to ſupport a deſerving wife, and four lovely children: around him he ſaw nothing but accumulating ſorrow; his family as it enlarged, became the more burthenſome, and he ſhuddered when he conſidered them, as grown up to maturity.—At laſt he determined to apply to his uncle, he did ſo, but was repulſed with

with unfeeling contempt: his mind ſunk under this inſult; and finding the expence of travelling too much for his reduced finances, he retired upon half-pay, and ſecluded himſelf and his children in the village before mentioned.—Here a freſh misfortune diſturbed his newly acquired tranquillity: One of his infants caught the ſmall-pox from a neighbouring cottage, and communicated it to the three others: the diſorder ſpread over them with rapid violence, and at one moment, the broken ſpirited *Mrs. Sydney* beheld her four children upon a ſick bed; the feelings of parents were now arouſed; Mrs. and *Mr. Sydney* watched alternately by their beds; they wearied heaven with prayers; they thought they had never before experienced diſtreſs; and they reproached themſelves for mourning the loſs of a fortune, which would ſo ſoon be a uſeleſs wiſh.—" O! my God" *Sydney* would cry, as he flung himſelf on his knees in the agony of parental deſpair, " O! give me but my chil-
" dren, and I will repine no more at thy de-
" crees: I will truſt their fates into thy hands;
" I will repoſe wholly upon thy mercy; ſpare
" them to my prayers, and a murmur ſhall ne-
" ver again iſſue from this grateful heart!"—
The phyſician who attended, was ſkilful, was humane: he could give no hopes of their two youngeſt; but he ſaid, the others would recover. *Mrs. Sydney* was inconſolable: her children on the verge of the grave, grew cloſer to her heart; each moment that brought the ſeparation near-

er,

er, encreaſed the agonies which diſtracted her throbbing breaſt. Sydney ſtrove to bear up againſt the blow; and he thought that he was able to ſupport it. The Phyſician appriſed him of the fatal moment, and adviſed him not to enter the chamber of his dying children: but prudence only belongs to a heart at eaſe, it is not a virtue that reſides with grief. *Mr. Sydney* was deaf to his arguments, he flew into the room, he hurried firſt to one departing babe, and then to the other; he wrung his hands, he wept, he accuſed his repining mind of being the cauſe of their deaths; he was wild with agony, and knew not that he was augmenting the piercing anguiſh of his beloved wife. *Mrs. Sydney* was ſitting by her youngeſt child; ſhe was folding it in her arms, and bedewing it with tears: the ſhortening breath of the infant foretold its approaching diſſolution; *Sydney* flew to it, to catch one laſt look from its cloſing eyes, but ere he reached the bed, a convulſive ſob put an end to its exiſtence. *Mrs. Sydney* was forcibly dragged from the chamber to her own: but the heart-broken father, ſtill watched over the flitting breath of his laſt babe. It lingered not long after its little brother, but quietly ſighed out its ſoul in the arms of the diſtracted *Sydney*: his emotions were violent beyond conception: he mourned over the lifeleſs forms, which were once the delight of his tender moments; and when he reflected upon the thought, of their being ſoon torn from him, and conſigned to duſt,

his paſſion knew no bounds. At laſt reaſon reſumed its ſway: he quitted his children's bodies, and endeavoured to calm the conflicting powers of his mind. Religion effected the purpoſe; it taught him reſignation and dependence on the mercy of God; it diſpelled all the gloom from his ſoul, and aided him in conſoling his wife. *Mrs. Sydney* was too deeply wounded to recover tranquillity for a length of time: the recollection of every little endearing action of her departed infants, ſtruck her with thrilling anguiſh. A mother ſees the pleaſing dawnings of the childiſh mind, and feels them more acutely than a father; ſhe calls them back to remembrance, and heightens every charm, which raiſed them to ſuch painful excellence, that the heart cannot ceaſe to dwell on it, though with poignant regret. But the gentle force of nature, recalls a mother ſooner from the paths of ſorrow, than all the ſtoic arguments of Philoſophy.—*Mrs. Sydney*, awoke to that tenderneſs for her remaining children, to which ſhe had ſlumbered, during her exceſſive ſorrow for the others. Her little daughter recovered from the ſmall-pox without a mark, and ſeemed to have received an additional portion of health: her ſon daily ſtrengthened in body and mind. Time at laſt ſwept away all melancholy traces of their infants, and left only the pleaſing idea of their little ſouls enjoying immortal bliſs.

Frederick

Frederick and *Arethuſa* were now their cements to this world; and each ſtrove with affectionate emulation to outvie one another in the excellencies of their reſpective charge.—*Frederick*, as he advanced in years, gave in the bloſſoms of his youthful mind, a promiſe of ripened virtues and accompliſhments, when he ſhould attain the full perfection of manhood. *Arethuſa's* form was blowing into beauty; and her mind began to aſſume all that refinement and ſoftneſs, which adorns the female ſex. *Mr. Sydney* taught her ſoul all the firmneſs and literature of a man's; while his wife, diffuſed through it, the elegant ſenſibility, and romantic generoſity of her own. At the age of ſixteen *Arethuſa* was the acknowledged beauty of the village. She was little above the middle ſize; but her form being rather ſlender than otherwiſe, it made her appear of a greater height: her complexion was of an ivory whiteneſs, tinged but lightly with the bluſh of health; it was the ſnowy leaves of the maiden roſe, whoſe retiring boſom, glows faintly with a mild and blended bloom: her treſſes were of the rich hue of the cheſnut, and dropped in profuſe cluſters on her fair forehead, and adown her ſlender waiſt: her eye-laſhes were dark and long, which gave great ſoftneſs to the ſtealing eye beneath, that from their ſhade was often miſtaken for black, though in reality, it was the pureſt cerulean. Thoſe who beheld *Arethuſa Sydney*, might have exclaimed with the ſame rapture as the poet,

" Mark'd you her eye of heavenly blue?
" Mark'd you her cheek of roſeate hue?
" That eye, in liquid circles moving,
" That cheek, abaſh'd at men's approving,
" The one, loves arrows darting round,
" The other, bluſhing at the wound."

Arethuſa was born in the ſmiling month of May, and her parents, upon the day that made her ſixteen, intended to celebrate it amongſt the peaſantry, with all the pleaſures their income could afford.—*Mr. Sydney's* reſidence was a cottage no way diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of the ruſtics, but by the rich drapery of vines and honey-ſuckles, with which he had adorned it: it ſtood at the foot of a lofty mountain, upon whoſe ſlope grew aſh-trees intermingled with wild fir, hazels, and ſycamore, whoſe blended foliage reclining from its ſide ſtreamed over the thatched roof with beautiful irregularity. A ſmall orchard, where the fruit-trees were diſperſed in all the confuſion of nature, winged it, on either ſide; which made the cottage at a diſtance appear emboſomed in trees. The front of the houſe opened into an extenſive and rich meadow, hedged with fragrant hawthorn, and ſupplying the place of a Garden, by the luxurience of its waving graſs, brilliant poppies, and millions of uncultured flowers, ſown by the hand of bountiful nature: here the warblings of the feathered ſyrens which ſung in the thicket, or chaunted in the wood, ſupplied the place of

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vocal hirelings: here a light illuminated ſtream, emerged from the depths of the foreſt, over a ridge of rocky ſtones, with the roar and foam of Niagara, and then ſinking into its ſmooth bed, ſobbed along the foot of the meadow, until its waves ſtole away in gentle murmurs, among the obſcuring trees; here the ſpeckled trout, and all its devoted ſpecies, played fearleſs in the wave; here roſe from its oſier iſle, the water-lilly, in all the majeſty of height, and crowned with a diadem of light; here the ſnowy ſwan weaved its neſt; and here the prattling duck, ſwam with her infant brood.

On this ſpot, was to be celebrated the birth-day of *Arethuſa*. The morning roſe upon it with unwonted ſplendor, and added new tints to the already brilliant flowers. The ruſtics of the adjoining hamlet in their rural finery, repaired to the meadow, where they were received by *Arethuſa*, with retiring and unaffected diffidence: ſhe was appointed Lady of the day, and her uſual modeſty, joined to the novelty of her ſituation, could not fail to confuſe her: a tall oak, that roſe in the centre of the field, had been decorated with garlands of flowers, and around this, (*Arethuſa* herſelf, joining in the ſport,) the peaſantry formed a ring, ſinging ſylvan hymns to May, and dancing with the feſtive grace of untaught nature. The dance concluded: the villagers ſeated themſelves as fancy led, upon the graſs in careleſs groupes; while the bluſhing *Arethuſa*, like another Hebe, preſented

ſented each company with bowls of delicious cream, and baſkets of Wood-ſtrawberries. She had juſt placed the fruit, with affectionate grace at the feet of her parents, when from amid the thick branches of the foreſt, a company of young, and unknown peaſants, burſt forth: they advanced with polite and eaſy confidence, (a thing unuſual to the ruſtics of Northumberland,) and making profound obeiſances to *Miſs Sydney*, entreated the indulgence of being admitted into the feſtivity of the day: *Mr. Sydney*, who was hoſpitable to an exceſs; deſired them to conſider themſelves as invited; and alſo ordered his daughter to attend her gueſts. *Arethuſa*, from the hands of an attendant, took a bowl filled with the nectar of the dairy, and a baſket with wild ſtrawberries, and approaching, timidly preſented them to the apparently ſuperior peaſant. One of them paid her a gallant compliment upon the ſnowy hand ſhe held forth, to which ſhe gave no attention, for her confuſion was crimſoning her delicate complexion, and her baſhful eyes were ſinking under the ardent gaze of his companion, but ſhe ſtole a ſide-long looking glance, as ſhe turned from them to her parents; ſhe ſighed and inwardly wondered at the beauty of the rural youth.—The young peaſant was indeed lovely; he was tall and manly; yet graceful in his ſhape: his complexion, from the whiteneſs of his forehead, might be ſeen to be naturally fair; but exerciſe appeared to have bronzed it; and health to have

ſuffuſed

ſuffuſed his cheek with an ardent bloom: his eyes were full, blue, and inſufferably radiant: his eye-brows expreſſively arched: his noſe an acquiline, which gave his fine face an air of majeſty; and his mouth, from which his under-lip rather projected in pouting beauty, was of a rich ruby hue: his auburn hair waved over his countenance in irregular curls, and flowed down his back in profuſe ringlets: his voice was ſweet, but not plaintive; and in ſhort his whole appearance betokened that lively impetuoſity of temper which reſides with the warm heart, whoſe youth has not yet put on the garb of care.—His four companions were all elegant men, and of engaging complaiſance; but they were not handſome. *Arethuſa* liſtened to their rapturous encomiums upon her beauty, with bluſhing indifference; ſhe had ſight and hearing only for their ſuperior.

Frederick now called the attention of the meadow: he appeared in the green habit of a hunter, with a bow in his hand, a quiver at his ſhoulder; and calling all the young men who were candidates for the archers fame, he prepared to ſhoot at a target that was at the bottom of the field: the ſtrangers now ſtarted up and declared themſelves competitors for the prize: a bow was given to each, and each in his turn, endeavoured to hit the mark; the beautiful peaſant twanged his bow, and the ſwift arrow cut the air in a moment, and was imperceptible in its flight, until the ſhouting villa-

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gers beheld it quivering in the midſt of the target. The youth was then led up to *Arethuſa*, who, with downcaſt eyes, and trembling hands, preſented him a bow of poliſhed wood, decorated by her with all the flowers of the ſeaſon; he received it with reſpectful ſilence; and *Frederick*, though a loſer by the young man's dexterity, generouſly ſeated him beſide his ſiſter, as the victor's place.—The village maidens now advanced, and to the muſic of an ill-touched guitar, ſung each a ſimple and affecting air; her, whoſe voice was the ſweeteſt, and whoſe execution was unaffected, received from *Miſs Sydney*, a ſtraw hat, prettily ornamented by her hands. The whole multitude of ſwains and virgins, now preſſed forward, and humbly beſought a ſong from the diffident *Arethuſa:* ſhe in vain tried to excuſe herſelf; the honeſt people looked diſappointed, and unhappy; her parents were diſpleaſed, ſhe complied with their requeſt, and the villagers forming a ſemi-circle on the graſs, ſhe took into her hand a lute: the evening had withdrawn itſelf imperceptibly, and the moon ſilently mounting through the thin clouds of heaven, ſhed on the tranquil waves of the ſtream, a mild and quivering luſtre; the ſhivering wood only ſighed to the ſtealing breeze; the radiant hoſt of heaven, glittered on the dew-wet flowers: in this moment of ſtillneſs, *Arethuſa* awakened the air to melody, and in a ſoft, low, and plaintive voice, breathed out the following

AIR.

AIR.

O! Love! I feel thy melting power
Wounds not in days tumultuous joys;
Thou ſeek'ſt the viſionary hour,
When penſive thought, the mind employs;

When ſtillneſs wakes the muſing drear,
When fancied woe, o'erflows the eyes,
Thou wrapp'ſt thee in the trickling tear,
And on the heaving boſom lies.

'Tis now thou whett'ſt the pointed dart;
'Tis now thy dang'rous languors found
An arrow now, you pierce the heart;
Now melting, ſlides into the wound.

Swift thro' the veins, thy poiſon glides,
The ſoul diſſolves, and dies away;
Now back, rolls on, in furious tides,
And whelms the heart, its trembling prey.

She ceaſed; but the ſtranger who ſat at her ſide, ſtill thought he heard her touching voice; its ſoft notes, ſtill died upon the air; its thrilling ſhakes ſtill vibrated in his heart; he felt the truth of her ſong in its execution; his ſoul was ſwelling with rapture, and now melting with tenderneſs, he knew not that ſhe had ended, nor that the eyes of *Mr. Sydney* were fixed in aſtoniſhment upon him, as he gazed with paſſion on the lovely features of *Arethuſa:* ſhe lifted up her eyes, but obſerving his rivetted to her, ſhe caſt them down with confuſed modeſty; and as the mantling blood flu̇ſhed her face and neck, with a bloomy bluſh averted her head from him: this awakened him from the delirium into which he was plunged, and he, now for the firſt moment, obſerved that the ſyren voice, which had charm-

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ed him, no longer trembled in his ear; he aroſe confuſed and agitated, while a loud laugh from his companions echoed over the meadow. The villagers roſe alſo, and after regaling themſelves with a ſlight repaſt, left the benevolent *Mr. Sydney's*, with greatful and joyous hearts. The ſtrangers expreſſed their reſpect in more graceful terms; and did not leave the ſcene of their pleaſures, until it was deſerted by the fair daughter of its poſſeſſor.

The next day, *Arethuſa*, as was her uſual cuſtom, wandered amid the ſhades of the foreſt; the trees were cloathed with the tender verdure of ſpring: the ſod was ſtrewn with wild flowers: and the birds were warbling their ſweeteſt notes: the ſky was ſerenely blue, and now and then a vagrant cloud ſwam over the ſurface, as if to vary the ſcene; and to gain a luminous poliſh, from the brilliant beams of the ſun: nature had aſſumed her livelieſt vernal robe, but ſhe did not impart her accuſtomed delight to *Arethuſa*; ſhe ſtrayed through the walks, without obſerving them; if a ſudden zephir, lifted the light branches at her ſide, ſhe looked back with eagerneſs, and ſeeing nothing, turned with a diſappointed air, aud purſued her walk; ſhe felt as if ſhe expected ſomething, and not being ſatisfied, gave up her mind to an unuſual, and diſſolving melancholy: her thoughts were confuſed, and always recurring to the meadow; at every breathing, ſhe caught herſelf repeating ſome words of the ſong that ſhe had ſung the preceding

preceding evening. She had now approached ſo near to the village, that ſhe plainly diſcerned the hand of the dial-plate on the church, pointing to three; as that was the dinner hour of the family, and fearful of alarming her anxious mother, by her ſtay, ſhe hurried home and traverſed the foreſt with light ſteps, but unaccountably heavy heart.—Her ſtay had not been perceived: and ſhe ſeated herſelf at table, without being queſtioned concerning her walk. The diſcourſe turned naturally, upon the entertainments of the former day; and among the various ſubjects it afforded for converſation, the unexpected appearance of the ſtrange peaſants was mentioned; *Mr. Sydney* with wonder: every one had their ſeparate opinions of the young men. *Frederick* thought it poſſible that they were only Ruſtics, though he allowed them to be poliſhed ones. *Mrs. Sydney* imagined that they might be brothers, driven by adverſity, from the elegant world. *Mr. Sydney*, with more judgment, ſaid, he perceived in them too refined a manner for common peaſants, and too much gaiety for misfortune, and therefore he acknowledged, he was bewildered in fruitleſs conjectures. *Arethuſa* was ſilent, though inwardly ſhe approved of the ſuppoſitions of her mother.—*Frederick* and his father withdrew to their recreative toil in the orchard, where they had a ſmall, but well cultured garden; and left *Mrs. Sydney* and her daughter, to enjoy their own contemplations. Four days paſſed away ſincethe twenty

twenty ninth of the month, and the young peaſants were fled from every memory, but that of *Arethuſa*; when ſhe wandered forth among the woody wilds, juſt as evening huſhed the roaring gale; with a volume of Milton in her hand, open at the page of, *Il Penſeroſo:* as the ſhades of the gigantic trees grew deeper, and the indiſtinct walks, frowning with a darker gloom, preſented to her eye obſcure and nameleſs ſhapes, her mind aſſumed, by degrees, more of fear than melancholy; and ſhe ſtarted at the echo of her own footſteps from a deep dell, down which the river ruſhed from the wood. In this dell, ſtood the ruin of an antique church, which being no longer the reſort of men, was become an aſylum for ominous birds: From its walls the raven ſcreamed; the ſcreech-owl yelled; and flying to and fro, made the ruin echo with their flapping wings. *Arethuſa* knew that they were there; but terror delights to augment; her oppreſſed brain, whirled with the idea of ſkulking robbers, heightened by each appalling circumſtance. The gloom was thickening faſt; ſhe heſitated; her heart fluttered and ſhe breathed quick; the village curfew, ſounded in her ear,

"Swinging ſlow with ſullen roar."—

As ſhe turned haſtily towards home, a grey owl, ſailing with leaden flight upon the oppreſſed air, flapped its heavy wings acroſs her face; its horrid hoot pierced her ear, while it flew with perturbed quickneſs over her head; terror ſtiffened her to the ſpot for a moment, but ſuddenly

ly recollecting herſelf, ſhe darted forward with the ſwiftneſs of thought; and flew through the intricate paths of the foreſt without a ſtop: at laſt fatigue overcame her, and ſhe leaned againſt a tree, vanquiſhed by fear and flight: here her burſting heart found vent, ſhe ſobbed aloud, and in an inſtant, beheld a human figure ſtarting from the depths of the wood: ſhe gave a loud ſhriek, and clung to the tree that ſupported her; the perſon approached, and bade her not be alarmed: who can deſcribe the various emotions of pleaſure, timidity, and doubt, which ſwelled her heart, when ſhe thought it was the voice of the lovely ſtranger: ſhe aſked him in faultering accents, his name: her terrors were ſoon diſpelled, by his quick reply of "*George* "*Cecil*," and at the ſame time accompanied with an exclamation of joy, "can it be poſſible that I am now ſpeaking to *Miſs Sydney?* If I am not miſtaken, ſuffer me to conduct you home;" as he ſpoke, he reſpectfully offered her his arm, which ſhe thankfully accepted, for though the darkneſs was too great to ſuffer objects to be viſible; from his voice, ſhe was certain that he was the peaſant. They were ſoon paſt the precincts of the foreſt, and entering into the meadow, beheld the orchard and hamlet, covered with lights; they advanced; and being perceived by the people, were ſurrounded in a moment by ſervants and ruſtics—"Ah! God "bleſs you Miſs, I am glad you be found!"—was the ſound from every lip: *Mr. Sydney*, and *Frederick*,

Frederick, alſo came forward, and tenderly embracing her; told how much they had been alarmed at her ſtay; and how long they had ſearched the orchard, and hamlet in vain "My "dear ſiſter! (cried *Frederick*,) every one has "been frightened; the ſervants have ſpread it "every where, that you are miſſing; and all "your village friends, have been flocking here, "to aſſiſt in the ſearch: each ſtriving, each "hoping to be the fortunate one to find you." "And I, (ſaid the ſtranger,) have been deſtined to that pleaſure".—*Frederick* turned with ſurprize, and recognizing in his features, thoſe of the victor, who had won the prize in the conteſt of archery; he ſhook his hand with joy, and led him triumphantly into the houſe. All *Arethuſa's* now ridiculed terrors were talked over with glee; the table was ſpread, and a light ſupper, which their poultry-yard and garden afforded, filled the board. The ſtranger diſcovered a brilliant and lively fancy, joined to a knowledge of the elegant world. *Arethuſa* was in ſpirits; and they now ſaw, what they had not had leiſure to regard before; that the young peaſant was no longer ſuch, either in his manners or appearance; his habit was graceful and faſhionable, his converſation was poliſhed; his air was all dignity and manlineſs.—*Mr. Sydney* obſerved this with wonder, he therefore candidly expreſſed that aſtoniſhment, and received from the youth the following anſwer.—"I cannot "ſatisfy your inquiries, without firſt entreating "a pardon,

" a pardon, for ſtealing into your hallowed " amuſements, in a habit that neither belonged " to myſelf, or my companions, I proteſt my " intentions were innocent; and if I have your " forgiveneſs, upon that aſſurance, I will pro- " ceed."—" you have" ſaid *Mr. Sydney*. The ſtranger bowed, ſmiled and reſumed.—" I came " down here, in company with four gentlemen, " with a deſign of making a Tour of the Lakes. " The town, which is about ten miles from this, " we intended to make ſome ſtay at; and from " thence, to viſit the moſt delightful ſpots in " this, and the adjoining country. The ro- " mantic ſituation of your village, allured us to " view it: while there, hearing of nothing but " the birth-day of *Miſs Sydney*, our curioſity " was rouſed; we learned the particulars, and " conceived the idea of going in maſquerade, " to be a witneſs of a rural fete;—we went, " and the enjoyments of that evening, will never " be effaced from my memory. It only now " remains to inform you of my name; my fa- " ther is *Sir Arthur Cecil*, and I am his only " child."

The diſcovery of his rank, neither encreaſed their eſteem, nor their complacence, for the Sydney's were not a family who cringed either to the rich or powerful: They had behaved to him with the warmth his merit appeared to deſerve, and it had been ſo great, that they needed not now to augment their attentions. The naming of himſelf to *Mr. Sydney*, ſeemed

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to have relieved the ſtranger from ſome embarraſſment, and he now gave a looſe to all the animation and richneſs of the imagination he poſſeſſed: He was more familiar, but he was not contemptuouſly ſo: In ſhort, he was ſo pleaſed with the family, that he made no motion to depart, until the village clock had ſtruck twelve. On his riſing, he was importuned by *Frederick* to accept the half of his bed, but he politely declined it, ſaying, "that his friends "who were at the hamlet, not knowing that "he had gone farther than a walk in the wood, "would be alarmed for his ſafety." This excuſe was accepted, and he was allowed to leave them. Hearty invitations were given to him to come frequently to *Abbey-grange* (the name of their cot) which were as eagerly caught by him.

And now it may be aſked, by what ſtrange means *Mr. Cecil* remained ſo long without approaching the houſe that contained *Arethuſa*; the reaſon was neither ſtrange nor great, it was fear of

——"the world's dread laugh,
Which ſcarce the firm philoſopher can ſcorn."

His companions obſerved the riveted attention with which he beheld *Miſs Sydney* on her birthday; and on their returning, had jeered him ſo ſarcaſtically upon his growing paſſion, (as they termed it) that his ſlumbering pride was alarmed. "I ſuppoſe *Cecil*," (ſaid one of the young noblemen, as they ſat down to ſupper in the Inn) "that we ſhall have you lingering when we

"leave

" leave this, like a departed ſpirit over a " grave, wandering through flowery lawns and " verdant groves; praying to the moon, ſigh- " ing to the ſtream, and worſhipping the " flowers. All the echos, as we go along, will " prate the ſame parrot-tune of *Arethuſa!* " *Arethuſa!*" " Upon my ſoul, a charming " picture (exclaimed another, ſhewing his white teeth as he laughed,) " and after all theſe " pretty pranks, if we get him torn from the " idol of his ſoul into *Keſwick*, we ſhall have " him flying frantic among the rocks, and per- " haps, at the full of the moon, when his " paſſion is as high as the cliff, and the lake " tempting, he will caſt himſelf from ſome " promontory's brow—and then farewell love- " ſick *Cecil!*"

This flouriſh was applauded by the four, in repeated peals of boiſterous laughter. *George* endeavoured to be heard.—" Well gentlemen! " well gentlemen!" (echoed the firſt, who ſpoke half choaked by his riſibility,) " I ſay it " will not be, *well gentlemen*, when you have " married a village beauty; brought her up to " town, with a pair of horns on your head, " to dignify the matrimonial yoke! O! by " Jove! horned beaſts always bear a yoke"— and then he laughed again at his own folly.— " I wiſh *Davenport*," (cried *George*,) " that " you would be leſs boiſterous, and give me a " hearing."—" A hearing! a hearing! yes, " give a lover a hearing!"—the whole four

" roared.—" But how long do you intend to " make your ſpeech ?"—aſked one " One mi- " nute"—" Stop, ſtop, mind, we bargain for " a proper minute; none of your lover's mi- " nutes, that take in the compaſs of an hour"— " Egad, *Davenport*," (interrupted another,) " That's well put in"—Here again they poured forth a volley of cauſeleſs laughter.— " You are very jocular gentlemen," (cried *Cecil*,) " upon a ſubject that neither concerns " you, nor touches myſelf; for I ſolemnly " vow——" " Hey, the duce!" (interrupted *Townſend*, affecting aſtoniſhment,) " How " came you by *ſolemnity*, unleſs you are either " lover or philoſopher ?"—" Poh, poh," (cried *Cecil*, turning ſmiling from him,) " I declare, " that I only regarded *Miſs Sydney* with admi- " ration,"—" No, no, that ſhift wont do " *George*," (returned his firſt tormentor,) " 'tis " deviliſh bad, execrable."—" What *Deven-* " *port*," (replied *Cecil*, who was ſorely galled by their ridicule) " I hope you dont think to " perſuade a man out of his ſenſes ?" " I ſay I " am *not* in love; and to convince you, I will " not ſtir an inch nearer *Abbey-grange* than I " am at preſent, for the ſpace of four days."— " Four days! What a ſacrifice!" roared the whole ſet, in convulſions of uproar,—" Good " night to you," ſaid *George*, taking a candle, and covering his confuſion by flight.

He had ſtrictly obſerved his promiſe, for it was on the evening of the fifth, when *Arethuſa* met

met him. He now returned to his companions; but happily arriving at the Inn before them, who had been ſtrolling over the village, and its environs all the day; he retired to his own room, to indulge the luxury of his contemplations, which were incongruous to the rudiments or biting raillery of his faſhionable friends.—The charms of *Arethuſa's* perſon, of *Arethuſa's* mind, were all his thoughts: He ſighed to think that ſhe was poor; and he bluſhed at the recollection of ſuch a thought. He now caſt away all reflection, and not conſidering the conſequence, devoted his every moment to *Arethuſa*. He was at her father's every day, and in her company the moſt part of it. At laſt his gay companions, wearied with his folly, (the faſhionable term for love) deſerted him, and purſued their tour, without his ſociety.

The converſe of *George Cecil* was too charming, to ſuffer the *Sydneys* to give themſelves leave to reflect upon the ſtrangeneſs of his conduct, in remaining ſo long at the hamlet, in which it had been his avowed intention only to ſtay for a few days. His company was agreeable although he was a lover; for he was not one of thoſe youths, who bind their brows with willow; wear a rueful face, and a dejected heart, as if love were made up of tears and woe.—No, the preſence of *Arethuſa* lighted him up to greater animation; he was then the ſoul of feſtivity, and courteſy; the

complacence he felt within, diffuſed itſelf over his intelligent countenance, and inſpired him with new and more refined ſentiments: in fact, he appeared the lover of the whole ſociety; for wherever *Arethuſa* came, every object was conſecrated to him.—*Miſs Sydney* in ſecret, ſighed for that love, he in ſecret beſtowed: She looked with horror upon that moment which was to bear him from her. She painted the charms of the London women, in all the exaggerated colours of jealouſy and deſpair, and in their beauties ſhe beheld her ruin. *Arethuſa* had given *George* a watch-paper, that he had ſeen her cutting, which he accepted upon condition, that ſhe would receive a pocket-book from him; as the preſent was trifling ſhe conſented; and the next day, *George* took an opportunity, whilſt *Mr.* and *Mrs. Sydney* were abroad in the village, and *Frederick* exerciſing himſelf upon the meadow, to approach her, and preſent her with an elegant pocket-book, ſaying at the ſame time: "If you are not diſpleaſed with this "book, you know not how happy it will make "me; for mercy's ſake, *Arethuſa*, do not reject "it!" *Miſs Sydney* ſtretched out her hand to receive it, which he preſſed fervently to his lips, and then hurried from her to join *Frederick*. She ſat for ſome time without motion, his air alarmed her, and his addreſs, ſo much more earneſt than ſuch an occaſion required, appeared full of myſtery. At laſt ſhe unclaſped the ſilver lock of the book, which, to her great

ſurpriſe and delight, ſhe found was the poems of her beloved *Warton*. She took out the pencil from its caſe: She opened the pockets, and in one of them ſhe beheld a folded paper; a ſtrange emotion withheld her hand from ſeizing it; at length ſhe drew it out; her heart beat, ſhe turned ſick, ſhe ſighed, ſhe opened it, and the firſt words which met her eye, were, "Beloved *Arethuſa!*"—She now no longer doubted what it was; prudence whiſpered her to return it unread; but love, all-powerful love, commanded her to go on; ſhe did, and read the following epiſtle:

"Beloved *Arethuſa!*

"I have ſtruggled long with emotions which "tear my heart. The dread of your diſplea-"ſure, has hitherto withheld me from laying "open to you my whole ſoul; a ſoul replete "with the moſt enthuſiaſtic love of you; its "firſt, its only love. I am unable to contend "with a paſſion, that I find will ceaſe only "with my life. Even deſpair will be prefera-"ble to the cruel ſuſpenſe now preying on my "heart.—O! *Arethuſa!* do not ſteel that melt-"ing ſoul againſt him, whoſe being will be "devoted for ever to you! Do not frown up-"on me; do not wound me by ſilent reproach! "Say that you pity—ſay that you forgive the "ſtratagem I have made this uſe of.—My "happineſs is in your hands; do not be ſo "barbarous as to devote to miſery the moſt

"enamoured,

" enamoured, the moſt faithful of lovers—
" the unhappy *Cecil.*"

The eyes of *Arethuſa* ſtreamed as ſhe read. In the firſt confuſion of her mind, ſhe flew to her pen, and wrote this haſty ſcrawl:

" Ah *Mr. Cecil!* It is you that are cruel—
" Why did you diſturb me with the recital of
" your uneaſineſs? Had you buried it in your
" own breaſt; had you extinguiſhed it by the
" force of reaſon, I had been content; but
" now you have cruelly undeceived me; you
" have made me the participator of your (ſhe
" ſighed,) diſtreſs.—Your happineſs is in my
" hands. Good God! you do not mean what
" you write? I hope not, or elſe I am miſe-
" rable.—My deſtiny is in the hands of my
" father."

She folded it with trembling hands; and now the means by which ſhe was to give it to him, was to be conſidered. She ſaw *Cecil's* eyes directed from the meadow to the window; ſhe underſtood their language, and retired from the apartment. Her impatient lover, at the inſtant he perceived her departure, flew to the houſe, and entering the room ſhe had quitted, ſeized the letter ſhe had left upon the table, and depoſiting it with hurry in his boſom, rejoined *Frederick*, to whom he made an excuſe of ſome engagement in the village, and gaining his reluctant permiſſion to depart, he bounded through the wood with haſte, till he was far from

from the inhabitants of *Abbey-grange*, and then caſting himſelf upon the graſs, he drew the letter from his boſom, and after kiſſing it again and again, broke the ſeal and read it. The extacy of this moment is beyond deſcription. He repeated the name of *Arethuſa* ten thouſand times in a breath; he devoured the paper with kiſſes; and acted the extravagancies of a madman, rather than of a lover. He would have returned and thrown himſelf at her feet, to thank her goodneſs, but a little reflection convinced him of the impropriety of ſuch conduct; he knew the retiring modeſty of *Arethuſa*, and he ſaw that his preſence would only aggravate her delicate confuſion, and be of no ſervice to his cauſe. Smothering his furious and almoſt uncontrolable emotions, he now turned his ſteps towards the hamlet, with a determination to viſit *Mr. Sydney's* the very next morning. Purſuant to this reſolve he aroſe at an early hour, and traverſed the foreſt with quick footſteps, intending to be at *Abbey-grange* for breakfaſt: As he went along, his ideas were all taken up with the condeſcenſion of *Arethuſa*; yet the thought of taking advantage of it, by applying to her father, never once ſtruck him: he ſaw that he was beloved; that the object of his wiſhes would be continually before his ſight; and his deſires for that time were fully gratified. No ſettled plan of future action was digeſted in his mind; his exceſſive joy was a vortex that ſucked in every ſubordinate idea,

and

and as it whirled deprived him even of reaſon. As he entered the meadow by the winding path from the foreſt, he beheld on the banks of the ſtreamlet *Arethuſa* herſelf, leaning over its waves; one hand extended, as if inviting the ducks to come and enjoy the proviſion the other hand held in a baſket. *George* ſtopped at this lovely viſion, and contemplated it in ſilence; one knee was bent upon the ſoft ſod of the bank, while the white drapery that ſhaded her, floated upon the ground in majeſtic and ample folds: The morning breeze agitating her auburn treſſes, blew them by frequent and hurried blaſts acroſs her bluſhing cheek and ſnowy boſom: the freſhneſs of the gale added a richer glow to her complexion, which augmenting the ſoft fire of her azure eyes, as they beamed over the ſtream, rendered her whole figure ſo beautifully intereſting, that *Cecil* could have gazed for ever; but recollecting himſelf, he ruſhed forwards; the ſound he made, as he burſt through the entangled boughs of the wood, aroufed *Arethuſa*; ſhe ſtarted up as he advanced, her complexion fluſhed a deeper bloom, and ſhe turned from him with quick, though irreſolute ſteps. He approached as ſwiftly, and catching her hand, would have ſpoken, but the ſudden appearance of *Mr. Sydney* at the top of the meadow, prevented him; and he could only preſs the downy hand he held. *Arethuſa* too well underſtood the gentle preſſure; her bluſhes and diſtreſs redoubled;

doubled; ſhe extricated her hand from his, and unknowing what ſhe did, fled from him into the houſe.

George knew her emotions proceeded from a juſt delicacy, and he judiciouſly deſiſted from following her.—*Mr. Sydney* had by this time come up to him, and after wiſhing him a good morning, enquired what reaſon drove his daughter ſo faſt from him? Was ſhe aſhamed of her morning diſhabille?" "Perhaps ſo"—returned *Cecil*, with a forced air of negligence, and immediately turned the converſation, by ſaying he was come to breakfaſt at *Abbey-grange*." "That, (ſaid his companion) you will not "taſte this hour at leaſt! We have none of us "fulfilled our morning engagements, and till "thoſe are done no viands grace the board."—As *George* was curious to know what theſe employments were, he requeſted to aſſiſt in them, though ignorant of what would be required of him.

Mr. Sydney led him into the garden, where he ſaw *Frederick* buſily digging, in order to render the earth fit for the reception of different ſeeds. A ſpade was put into *Cecil's* hand, who handled it with ſtrength, but not much dexterity.—"And where are the ladies?"—aſked he to *Mr. Sydney*, who repli d, "O! the ladies! "They are now ſettling the domeſtic concerns "of the day. *Arethuſa* has already diſcharged "her duties in the poultry-yard, and is now "probably

" probably ſpreading the table to regale us."—
" Happy family!" thought *Cecil.*

The hour of labour being expired, the bell rung, and they entered into the houſe: They ſeated themſelves at a rural breakfaſt of curds and cream, with the addition of tea, for *Mrs. Sydney* and *George*. *Arethuſa* preſerved a profound ſilence during the meal, except when a queſtion from her father forced her to reply. During the whole day, *George* could never catch an opportunity of expreſſing his gratitude and his love. She eluded all his endeavours, and was watchful to quit the room firſt, if ſhe ſaw it was probable her mother would leave it: He augmented *his* watchfulneſs in turn, but in vain, though he frequented the cottage regularly every day, he found not the ſhadow of an opportunity. Her efforts to fly from his private company, were apparently redoubled; and after a week paſſed in this unpleaſant anxiety, he ſaw, with ſurprize, that ſhe ſhunned his ſociety even in the preſence of the whole family. If his eyes met hers, as he gazed with troubled hope upon her face, ſhe would caſt them haſtily on the ground, ſwimming in tears. This alteration in his *Arethuſa* was a myſtery, a dreadful one to her lover. He endeavoured to account for it; he was bewildered in agitation.

In the midſt of one of theſe reveries, he took out her letter, fooliſhly expecting to find an explanation there. " My deſtiny is in the hands

" of

" of my father." read he, reflecting; " does ſhe " not mean here, that if he ſanctions my addreſs? " and has he ſanctioned it? (cried he, interrupt- " ing himſelf,) no! I have not yet ſolicited " that ſanction,—heavens! can it be poſſible, " that *Arethuſa* ſhould be miſerable from that " cauſe? Is it probable, that ſhe can have " imagined *me* capable of harbouring villain- " ous deſigns?—merciful father! let me fly! " let me wipe the tears from her cheek, and the " ſtain from my character! ſhe has thought me a " ſeducer! O! how injurious to my love!" as he ſpoke, his whole boſom burning with impa- tience, he flew to *Mr. Sydney's*.—On his arrival he deſired a ſervant to inform his maſter, that a gentleman wiſhed to have a few minutes pri- vate converſation with him: the man delivered his meſſage, and was followed by *Mr. Sydney* into the ſtudy, where *George* was; he looked ſurprized: *Cecil* diſmiſſed the ſervant, and ſhut- ting the door, took his ſeat by that of his won- dering auditor. He then diſcloſed the ardour of his love for *Miſs Sydney*; his expectations; his for- tune; and fairly aſked his permiſſion to addreſs her. *Mr. Sydney* liſtened with great attention; and when he had concluded, ſpoke to him thus.—"I " feel the honor, *Mr. Cecil*, which you offer to " my family: I know alſo, that there is not a " young man in the world, to whom I would " ſo freely give my child, (were ſhe miſtreſs of " the Indies,) as yourſelf, I eſteem you with " the fervent regard of a parent, and to prove

" it,

" it, I will even ſacrifice my own intereſt, to " yours. You acknowledge that *Sir Arthur* " *Cecil* is proud; that he has looked forward, " with the hopes of one day beholding you uni- " ted to a woman of high rank, and vaſt for- " tune. You own, that by marrying *Arethuſa*, " you will hazard his fatherly affection. Con- " ſider my dear ſir! the conſequence of ſuch " imprudence: ſuppoſe that you are wedded to " my daughter; which God forbid, for both " your ſakes! your father, it is probable will " not ſee you; ſuppoſe he withdraws his yearly " bounty of a thouſand pounds from you; " what reſource have you then? a growing " family, a beloved wife, to ſupport upon no- " thing. I *cannot* aſſiſt you; Heaven knows " I ſpeak by a dreadful experience. I married " an excellent woman againſt my uncle's con- " ſent: I loſt his love, and the ſum he had an- " nually allowed me. I retired upon little " more than a hundred and fifty pounds a year " to this place. He is ſince dead, and has left " his fortune to a ſtranger; and I have the " miſerable reflection, that he expired without " leaving me his forgiveneſs. How would " ſuch a ſhocking idea be aggravated, had he " been my father. Conſider, I conjure you " my dear *Cecil!* I am not denying you my " daughter. I will not; but *I* wiſh, that *you* " would retract your generous offer?"—*George* was ſtartled by theſe reaſons, pronounced ſo calmly, and with ſuch ſerioufneſs, by a man whom

whom he ſo much reſpected: But love, returned with redoubled violence, and bore down every other thought with irreſiſtible force. He told *Mr. Sydney*, "no conſideration ſhould "tempt him to forego the hope of poſſeſſing "*Arethuſa*: and, that though he well knew "his father would be immoveable in his ob-"jections, if his conſent was aſked; yet, when "the thing was without remedy, he thought he "would ſee *Arethuſa*, and then his approbation "was ſecure."—*Mr. Sydney* tried in vain to diſſaude him from his purpoſe, he was fixed, and, no reaſoning could move him.

Mr. Sydney's laſt effort was yet to be made; he ſent for his wife and children, and acquainting them briefly with what had paſſed between him and *George*; demanded their unbiaſſed opinions. *Arethuſa*, when ſhe heard her father relate the firſt ſpeech of her lover, felt her whole ſoul thrill with tranſport; every unfavourable idea fled, ſhe could not refrain from caſting her timid eyes joyfully upon *Cecil*; who underſtood their expreſſion, and caught new ardour from every glance. *Mrs. Sydney* was the firſt that ſpoke, after the repeated intreaties of her huſband.—"You aſk my opinion *Charles*," ſaid ſhe, taking her huſband's hand with the tenderneſs of a matron, "can a different one proceed "from my lips, then what I teſtified by this "hand, when I gave it to you in the preſence "of God and man? Of that God, who has "hitherto ſupported us; who has ſtill preſerved

"to

" to me the love of my huſband:"—*Mr. Sydney* kiſſed her hand, at the ſame time adding, " Ah, *Mary!* you have taken a ſure woman's " way!"—He then turned to *Frederick*, who after long heſitation, and many bluſhes, at laſt ſaid, " It is my *duty*, not to differ from my " father."—His eye ſtealing towards *Cecil*, told where his inclinations were. *Mr. Sydney* now regarded *Arethuſa*; but a ſhower of tears that fell ſilently upon her boſom, was all the anſwer he could extort from her.—" What!" cried he, with an air of diſpleaſure, " Am I *ſingular* " in my opinion? Are you all ſo weak as to " graſp only at the preſent, and neglect the fu- " ture good? But take the conſequence!—I " declare, my wiſh is, that you *Mr. Cecil*, re- " nounce my daughter."—*Arethuſa* ſobbed aloud, and ſunk into the arms of her melting mother: *Mr. Sydney* rouſed by her emotions, added, in a ſoften'd tone; " But *Arethuſa* is " miſtreſs of herſelf, ſhe may decide for either; " if ſhe agrees with me, ſhe acts nobly indeed; " if for you, I ſhall not love her; but I will " admire her leſs. She ſhall always be my " child, my beloved child!"—*George* now flew forward, and ſeizing the hand of the weeping *Arethuſa*, preſſed it to his lips with a fervour, that told her his happineſs depended upon her anſwer. Her ſoul was overpowered: Her father exhorted her on one ſide, to arouſe her fortitude; her lover upon the other, entreating her compaſſion, hanging with anxiety, upon every

movement

movement of her lips, and breathing his heart with agonized tenderneſs upon her ſoft hand. *Miſs Sydney* was not able to ſupport the agitations of the moment; ſhe aroſe with difficulty. and begged permiſſion to withdraw with her mother, it was granted, and they left the room together, for *that* of *Miſs Sydney's*.

Arethuſa flung her arms about her mother's neck, and while their tears mingled as they fell, exclaimed, "Oh! my mother, direct me, tell "me how I ought to act?"—"Alas! my "child!" returned *Mrs. Sydney*, "I am diſ-"tracted with doubt; *Mr. Sydney* is juſt, but "he is ſevere."—*Arethuſa* again wept, her mind was irreſolute, and weakened with its ſtruggles: This was no time for vigorous exertions, ſhe knew it, and intreated her mother to inform her father, that ſhe was endeavouring to ſtrengthen her reſolution, to be ennobled to obey his (too harſh) dictates. Her mother left her, though reluctantly; and acquainted *Mr. Sydney*, who was pleaſed at this intention of his daughter's, as it appeared a ſymptom on which he could ground a hope, that ſhe would liſten to the voice of reaſon, not of love.

Arethuſa when left to herſelf, was diſtracted by the moſt violent emotions: She accuſed her father of cruelty, and then accuſed herſelf of injuſtice; but when the name of *Cecil* dropt from her lips, ſhe diſſolved in tender woe, and reſigned herſelf to languiſhing ſorrow. Reflection by degrees calmed her phrenzy, and ſhe

at

at laſt heroically reſolved to perform her duty, by complying with the wiſhes of her father; but the weakneſs of human nature ſtill withheld her from going to declare thoſe intentions ſhe inwardly determined never to ſwerve from. She ſolicited by a ſervant permiſſion to remain in her own chamber alone, untill the next morning, when ſhe hoped to have gathered ſufficient ſtrength of mind to acquaint them with her reſolution.—Her requeſt was granted; at night ſhe ſunk upon her pillow, only to wet it with the dew of ſorrow—ſleep fled her eyes; ſhe lay reſtleſs upon that bed, where once ſhe ſlept in the calm ſecurity of peace. As the ſtars fled before the eyes of dawn, ſhe aroſe agitated, and quitting her apartment, wandered forth into the wood.

But let us return to *Cecil*; he had beheld with rapture her emotions the day before; he ſaw too clearly the powerful aſcendancy he held over her, and he reſolved to turn it to his advantage. When ſhe retired to her chamber, he left *Mr. Sydney's* alſo, and procured at the village a licence, by which they might be united at any moment, then returning to the foreſt, he lay in ambuſh there, in order to ſpring out upon *Arethuſa*, when at her morning's avocations, and by the quickneſs of the ſurprize, his eloquence, and his love, he ſanguinely hoped to bear down all her objections. The event too well anſwered his expectations. He lay concealed amid the trees all night, untill the morning dawned

dawned, and along with it *Arethuſa*: He ſaw her move ſlowly down the declivity of the meadow towards the ſtream, he ſaw her eyes were overflowing with tears, and her cheeks flushed with their burning flow, her lovely hair hung in wild diſorder, her whole air was dejection; he beheld her approach with trepidation, the moment was impending upon which reſted his future fate. He dared not diſcover himſelf in the open meadow: ſhe wound ſlowly round its foot, and ſtruck amid the depths of the foreſt: *George* ruſhed out, he ſnatched both her hands within his, and dropping upon one knee before her, cried, in agonized accents: "O! *Arethuſa*, do not keep me in ſuch anguiſh, "heſitate not to decide my fate; but remember "that upon your anſwer depends the bliſs or "miſery of my future life." *Miſs Sydney* ſhook with terror, his ſudden appearance, his air, but above all, the ſolemnity of his laſt words, ſtruck horror to her heart, ſhe burſt into a flood of tears, and as they fell redoubling in haſte upon *Cecil's* hand, cried, "Merciful heaven, how "hard is my fate! why *Mr. Cecil*, why have "you obtruded yourſelf upon me? Cruel, "unkind man, I needed not this to augment "my miſery! You know, I muſt obey my "father, I have no power over my own actions; "O my God, what a ſcene of woe lies before "me!"—Here, the crowding tears ſtopped her utterance, and ſhe bowed her head upon the already wet hand of her lover. He was no

leſs agitated. "*Arethuſa*," ſaid he, in a low and tremulous tone, "I yield to my deſtiny—"I am born to be miſerable—I will renounce "you, I give you to the ſevere virtue of your "father—*I* will fly to diſtant climes; I will "wear out a life I am already weary of, in ob-"ſcurity and diſtreſs—May *you*, my *Arethuſa*, "never taſte the bitter draught that I drink of—A gleam of comfort will gild the gloom "of my deſpair, if I think that you are happy; "I fondly hoped to have ſpent that life with "you; but the viſion is paſt, I ſacrifice myſelf "to the cruel will of another, I doom myſelf "to perpetual woe!" Here he roſe haſtily from the ground, his looks pale, the fire exſtinguiſhed in his eye by tears, and was turning from her; but ſhe pulled him towards her, and flinging her arms around his, ſhe clung to it with all the ſtrength of the moment, ſobbing out inarticulate ſounds, and ſhedding torrents of tears.—"Cruel *Arethuſa!*" exclaimed *Cecil*, his looks all tenderneſs, "Are you ſo barbarous "as to wiſh to detain me to increaſe my miſery? "I muſt fly, I muſt bid you adieu for ever." "O do not! do not!" cried *Arethuſa*; then ſeeing he redoubled his efforts to be free, ſhe added, with an air of frantic haſte, "I conſent "to be yours, I deſert my father, my duty, for "thee!" *George* recalled to himſelf by theſe words, ſaw there was not a moment to be loſt, he hurried her along the foreſt, repeating all the wild acknowledgments of a grateful lover. A

ſhort

ſhort time brought them to the village church—they entered it, the curate was ſent for, and in the preſence of a few ruſtics, the ceremony was completed. *Arethuſa* ſunk into the arms of her eager *Cecil*. "Our fates are now linked for "ever," ſaid ſhe, with a deep ſigh. "They "are, they are," returned *George*, claſping her to his beating heart in a tranſport of joy—"Let "us now go to the *Grange*, let us receive the "benediction of your mother and your relent-"ing father. *Arethuſa* trembled at the ſound, ſhe dreaded his diſpleaſure, and ſhe ſickened at the thought:—*George* at length prevailed, they returned with as much ſpeed as their exhauſted ſpirits would permit, and entering the breakfaſt parlour, where the family were aſſembled, caſt themſelves at the feet of *Mr. Sydney*. He turned pale, he regarded them with ſilent aſtoniſhment. *Cecil* ſpoke, "*Arethuſa* is now mine, we are "married, and we come to ſupplicate for your "forgiveneſs, and your bleſſing." "Raſh "pair!" replied *Mr. Sydney*, "But I will not "upbraid; the die is now caſt, the deed is "irrevocable, and reſiſtance on my part would "be barbarity; come then to my paternal "arms," added he, embracing them with affection—"May God bleſs you? May he "avert thoſe ills which I dread!" *Mrs. Sydney* and *Frederick* now flew forward, embraces, tears, tender reproaches, and pardons, all mingled together. *Mrs. Sydney* was overjoyed, and her huſband now baniſhed all former unwilling-

neſs, and treated them as if their union had been the fondeſt wiſh of his heart.

Two months fled away in this delirium, before *Cecil* or his lovely bride beſtowed a thought upon the metropolis. But *Mr. Sydney*, whoſe affection looked forward to the more diſtant periods of their lives, anxiouſly revolved in his mind, ſome means by which they might ſecure the approbation of *Sir Arthur* to their marriage. He now adviſed *George* to go to town, and ſee his father, but by no means to take *Arethuſa* along with him. *Cecil* could not bear the idea of being ſo ſoon ſeparated, and poſitively refuſed undertaking the journey without her. *Arethuſa* herſelf earneſtly entreated to be his companion; and at laſt, by her prayers, and the refuſal of *George*, *Mr. Sydney* was prevailed upon to part with her.

When the day came that was to bear *Arethuſa* far from her paternal cot—her who had never quitted the arms of her parents for a moment.—She was quite depreſſed; the tears which ſtreamed from her eyes, ſeemed to propheſy, ſhe ſhould not ſee it ſoon again. Her mother, as her daughter was torn from her arms, ſunk into a ſwoon. *Frederick* ſhook the drops of ſenſibility from his cheek with manly ſhame. *Mr. Sydney* allowed his to flow—it was an awful moment for the firſt time, he was parting with a beloved though imprudent child; her tears drew forth his; he burſt from her twining arms, and regarding *Cecil* with a look of ten-

der reproach, ſaid—" It is you who rob us of " our *Arethuſa !*—Repay us for the pangs we " now feel, with an encreaſing love for her." *George's* eyes needed no interpreter.—He handed *Arethuſa* in ſilence to the carriage, then leapt in after her ; the poſtillion cracked his whip, the horſes flew, and the aching eyes of *Mr. Sydney* loſt the vehicle in the depths of the foreſt.

We muſt now for ſome time, bid adieu to *Abbey-grange*, and follow *Mr.* and *Mrs. Cecil* to town, at which place they arrived the ſecond day, fatigued both in body and mind. *George* quitted his beloved partner, (who was too much exhauſted to accompany him) in order to ſearch for ready furniſhed apartments, in which he intended to reſide until he was reconciled to his father.—He procured a ſuit of rooms in *St. James's* ſtreet, ſuited to his income. They were elegant though not large, and being accommodated with ſervants, he returned to the hotel where he had left his *Arethuſa*, and joyfully conveyed her to their new reſidence. *Cecil* now informed *Arethuſa* of the true ſtate of his mind ; he told her how much he dreaded *Sir Arthur's* ſeverity ; and by her advice, reſolved to poſtpone the evil day as far as poſſible, by not waiting upon his father until his mind was more compoſed, and better able to bear up againſt his anger.

The love of *eorge* was ſtill as ardent as ever ; ſecure of his *Arethuſa*, he now ſought means to enlarge her pleaſures. The entertainments

tainments of the town were new to her; and to every one in its turn, ſhe was conducted by her gallant huſband.

At *Vauxhall* and *Ranelagh*, the elegance of her form, her ſweet timidity, her graceful, yet ſimple dreſs attracted univerſal admiration. The ladies pryed at her with uneaſy curioſity, and then when they were obſerved by the men, ſhrugged their ſhoulders, threw back their heads, laughed loud, and ſwept on with apparent nonchalence. The other ſex advanced with their grinning teeth, and half-ſhut eyes, peeped at her through an opera-glaſs, and exclaimed, "Angel, goddeſs, or inimitable!" as the words came up.

The vanity of *Cecil* was gratified beyond meaſure, and he beheld her with new admiration. She herſelf was diſtreſſed, her eyes were caſt down, and her cheeks were covered with bluſhes. Some voices behind, which were loud and genteel, ſtruck her ear.—In the midſt of a laugh, one of them called out—"Egad there's "a fine woman before us! Dam me but I'll ſee "her face,"—at the ſame moment, ſhe felt a foot upon her train, involuntarily ſhe turned round.—"I beg your pardon Madam," ſaid a young gentleman, who was ſurrounded by five others: and then the whole party, amidſt interjections of admiration, poured forth volleys of laughter.—"A curſed impudent dog, you "are *Davenport!*"—cried one—*George* turned about—the whole groupe thronged about him

in

in a moment.—" How do you do, *Cecil?*" " How are you *Davenport?—Townſhend—Beauclerk—Wyndham?*" were their mutual enquiries,—*Davenport* tipt *George* the wink, and in a half whiſper, accompanied by ſignificant geſtures—" Is ſhe yours *Cecil?* Eh, dam me, a fine " woman, ſhe will cut a daſh in your phaeton" " —here he was running on with his tongue, whilſt his impudent eyes were running inſolently over the beauties of *Arethuſa—Cecil* interrupted him—" I wiſh you good night, gentlemen, I " will meet you to-morrow morning at twelve " o'clock, at the Star and Garter."—So ſaying, he burſt from them with the confuſed *Arethuſa*, and by her deſire quitted the room for their own houſe. Trifling as this incident appeared to *Mrs. Cecil*, when the tumult it had occaſioned was ſubdued; it appeared a matter for great inquietude in her huſband: He a thouſand times wiſhed that they had not ſtumbled upon that ſet of acquaintance, a thouſand times wondered at their impertinence—in ſhort he was quite fretful: It was the firſt time *Arethuſa* had ſeen him ſo, and ſhe was alarmed—ſhe expreſſed it—this immediately called him to reaſon, and to his uſual cheerfulneſs.

The next day at the appointed hour, (for he was one that never broke his engagements) *George* repaired to *Pall Mall*, where he met at the entrance of the tavern his ſix friends: They went in together, and mutual enquiries concerning pleaſure and health enſued. *Cecil* aſked

aſked the four who had parted from him in *Northumberland*, what entertainment their tour had afforded them.—" Ah, by Jove!" cried *Davenport*, who was the firſt to begin the attack, " We thought to have tricked you; but " dam me, *you* over-reached *us*—While *we* " were ſauntering amongſt rocks and lakes, " *you* were beſieging a girl, and bringing her " up to town." *Townſhend* interrupted him, " Faith *George* ſhe is worth ſtaying for, ſhe is " a damned fine woman, upon my ſoul—But " I ſee, ſhe's but raw yet, ſhe looked ſo " plaguy modeſt the other night, that curſe me " if I had courage enough to ſtare at her." " No, by gad, nor I"—cried *Beauclerk*—" Nor I, by Heaven," ſaid *Wyndham*—" Nor " I—Nor I," all cried at once. " Well but " *Cecil!*" roared *Davenport*, exalting his voice to be heard: " Damn you all, hold your tongues, " I ſay, *Cecil*: Zounds what a clamour!" here he ſtopped, 'till their noiſe died away in unequal murmurs, and then reſumed his oration. " I ſay *Cecil*, while we were in *Northumberland*, " we were all deviliſh frightened for you; " e'gad *we* were fools enough to think, that " *you* would be fool enough to marry her, and " ſhut yourſelf up in the country; turn do- " meſtic and renounce the *bon-ton*. Oh, dam " me, what a ſight it would have been; " *George Cecil* turned farmer; in flaped hat, " mended breeches, white waiſtcoat, worſted " ſtockings, thick ſhoes; drinking ale, eat-

" ing

" ing mutton, ſmoaking tobacco, playing with " his brats, whining to his wife, and obedient " to her father! O! curſe me, what a picture!" Here every one fell into convulſions of laughter. Davenport went on: " But now, here you " are, as young, as gay, as free as ever; and " what is better, have brought up, a new, " blooming, *modeſt* miſtreſs!——" O! Jupiter! " a *modeſt* miſtreſs!"

" Pray *Davenport?*" interrupted *George*, who had ſat biting his lips the whole time. " What " reaſon have you to ſuppoſe, that ſhe is either " my miſtreſs or my wife?"—" O! I beg your " pardon *Mr. Cecil*, for taking away your " *character!*"—replied he, ſmothering a laugh, twiſting his thumbs, and ſhutting his eyes; " I dare ſay you keep no miſtreſs; Lord for- " give me for inſulting ſo *worthy* a man; and " ſuch a paragon of *virtue*, as the Lady; I " only judged from theſe concomitant circum- " ſtances; that you were a young man and a " ſingle man, you hired apartments; you hired " ſervants; you took a ſingle Lady, and a hand- " ſome Lady too, to have the poſſeſſion of one " of your rooms. " God forbid that I ſhould put " wicked conſtructions upon any ſuch thing. " She may be as innocent as the dove—(by the " by, that's an unlucky image, for doves are ra- " ther amorous; (but I ſay ſhe may be virtue per- " ſonified; ſhe may be a *couſin* from *Northum-* " *berland*, or a quondam ſiſter, or a *mother* for " aught I know?"—Here he could contain no longer, but burſt out into ſuch redoubled peals

of

of laughter, that *Cecil*, ſnatching up his hat, in an accent of fury, cried, as he flew out of the room. "Inſolent blockhead!" Every one laughed at his rage. *Davenport* took his laſt words in good humour, and they ſallied forth, each wondering at his folly, who could have the impudence to keep a miſtreſs, yet want ſufficient to avow it.

As they ſauntered up *St. James's* ſtreet, they caught a glimpſe of *Mrs. Cecil*, juſt as ſhe was turning from her window. With one conſent they flew to the door, and made the ſtreet echo with their loud and repeated knockings. *Mr. Cecil* (who had that moment got in) rouſed at the ſound, but more by their loud and vociferous mirth, ſprang out of the drawing-room to give orders to be denied; but it was too late; the door was opened; ſeeing *Cecil*, they ruſhed up ſtairs bawling out—"We have found you!—*George* deſired them to be leſs boiſterous, and tell him what their commands were with him. "O! our commands are," returned *Davenport*, "That you take us into that room, and intro-"duce us to the Lady; and I pledge my word, "that we will all be as decent, and as hypo-"critical as yourſelf, or any body." *George* ſaw no reſource, he therefore led them to the door. *Davenport* whiſpered one. "Now "*Beauclerk!* now for a touch of my morals." Every hat was off. *Mrs. Cecil* roſe; her huſband approached with *Davenport* in his hand, his hat in his, eyes half ſhut, mouth drawn up, and

and his chin neſtled into his cravat. " *Mr.* " *Davenport* Madam!" Madam! iterated the joker, in a low voice. " The honourable *Mr.* " *Beauclerk; Sir Charles Townſhend*; *Lord* " *John Wyndham; Mr. Beauchamp*; *Captain* " *Villiers.*" Every one was introduced. *Captain Villiers* thought by a happy ſtroke of impudence, to ſhew his gallantry to *Mrs. Cecil*, and his wit to his companions. He bowed reſpectfully, and gently taking her hand. " I " wiſh you enjoyment of the ſtate into which " you have entered. Give me leave?"---*Arethuſa* bluſhed, and unconſcious of the meaning of " give me leave?" was ſurpriſed and frightened, as he took a haſty ſalute. The example once ſet, all of them crowded forward. *Arethuſa* ſhook and was ready to weep. *George* was no leſs agitated. *Beauclerk* advanced towards him. "By Jove! *Mr. Cecil*, the honey of " Hybla dwells upon your Lady's lip!" *Cecil* only bowed. They were ſeated, and converſation began. *Mr. Davenport* was as ſolemn as wiſdom; he was grave and ſententious; he was no longer the *witty*, but the *ſober Mr. Davenport.* All the reſt followed his example, they behaved civilly, and like well bred men *Cecil* was vexed as it robbed him of an excuſe to forbid their coming to his houſe: at length their politeneſs, gradually reſtored his good humour: *Arethuſa's* ſpirits returned with his. In ſhort two hours were ſpent agreeably enough. They roſe and took their leave, ſaying, they would

would take the liberty of ſometimes dropping in upon them.

When they were out of the houſe, they gave a looſe to the mirth they had hitherto reſtrained, in ludicrous obſervations, and witty deſcriptions.—"You acted your part nobly"—ſaid *Beauchamp* "did'nt I?" aſked *Davenport*, and then, without waiting for an anſwer, he ran on—"ay, faith "I looked as ſolemn as an owl, or a bear, or a "raſcally parſon, or any other damned cheat "amongſt them.—I gave her enough of modes-"ty, and ſuch ſtuff egad, with my words mang-"led between my lips, as they ſqueezed out "like mince-meat."—"What a deviliſh piece "of impudence *you* did, (cried *Townſhend*), rot "me *Villiers*, if *I* could have done it."—"Why "not?" aſked the other, with an air of triumph "It was a bold ſtroke by heaven,—zounds, ſhe "ſaw I had taken out a licence for impudence, "by my ſcarlet coat."—"Ay, confound you, "(roared *Davenport*) *I* begrudged you that, *I'd* "have given a hundred to have done it the "firſt; but I dont know how, I had quite for-"got that ceremony"—"I ſay (cried *Villiers*,) "did you obſerve how *Cecil* bit his lips when I "wiſhed her joy?—I did'nt ſay of what, whe-"ther of being wife or miſtreſs"—"Oh! that "was good! damned good!" they all cried in a loud laugh.—*Davenport* looked at his watch; he had an appointment and left them: his departure broke up the ſet, and they all parted different ways.—In the mean time *Cecil* was diſturbed

diſturbed beyond conception, he ſaw the inſults to which his beloved *Arethuſa* would be expoſed, if he did not openly avow her to be his wife; but the dread of the world's ſcorn; of the raillery of the young men, was invincible. He was unable to bear theſe different emotions without diſcovering them to his lovely wife by ſudden ſtarts of peeviſhneſs, and ill-nature. She tenderly entreated him to give her a reaſon for ſuch an uncommon behaviour. He ſaid, it was from the offence he had taken at the liberties thoſe impudent young men had offered to her: he acknowledged himſelf wrong, to wreak his vengeance upon the object for whom he was anxious, and he promiſed never again to be guilty of the ſame fault.—In his own mind he revolved the reaſons, for, and againſt, his delay of waiting upon his father, and after four days mature conſideration, he at laſt acquainted *Arethuſa* with his reſolution to go to *Sir Arthur's* that very day. A thought of her beloved huſband, was always applauded, and adopted by *Arethuſa*; ſhe therefore acquieſced, and ſaw him depart with a heavy heart, but cheerful countenance, for St. James's-Square. He was told by the porter that his maſter had left town that very morning for his ſeat in Surry; but he had left a letter to be delivered to him, ſhould he call. *George* took it with trembling hands, and darting through the ſquare, entered his own houſe, where he threw himſelf upon a ſopha, pale and breathleſs.—*Arethuſa* feared to ſpeak—ſhe ſat down

down beſide him, while he uncloſed the fatal letter—ſhe read it over his ſhoulder, as he flew with rapid eyes over its contents. It was couched in the following words. " I had heard " an imperfect rumour that you were married; " it alarmed me juſtly, as I knew you remained " in Northumberland, ſeparated from the party " with which you went; you had not written " to me for ſome time, and I was ignorant of " your reſidence; I ſent to *Mr. Davenport*, " (who I thought was the likelieſt perſon to " give me any intelligence concerning you,) " and queſtioned him about the truth of the re- " port: he told me, you were in town; he " confeſſed alſo, that you had a lady with you; " but he averred that ſhe was your miſtreſs: he " ſaid you never proclaimed her as your wife, " nor introduced her by any name to him, or " his friends: he told me, ſhe was pretty, a far- " mer's daughter in Northumberland: in ſhort " he ſaid if you were married to her, you were " united to a country coquet, educated in ig- " norance and vanity.—If you have betrayed " this girl, you are a villain, and I deſire never " to ſee your face more.—If you have married " her you are a fool and a diſobedient ſon.— " You have ruined my hopes, and my expecta- " tions, you are not the *George Cecil* I took you " for, and I renounce you forever: you have " debaſed your underſtanding by marrying a " pretty idiot; and you have been undutiful in " uniting yourſelf to one of mean extraction,

" without

" without the conſent of your father. I have
" conſidered theſe things cooly, and diſpaſſio-
" nately, and the reſult is,—I will not withdraw
" from you the ſalary which I have hitherto al-
" lowed you; but, I command you, never to
" appear before me whilſt I live.—I *can* par-
" don the levity, and follies of youth, but I *will*
" *not*, its guilt, and diſobedience.

Arthur Cecil."

Arethuſa dropt ſenſeleſs upon the floor,—*George* ſtruck his forehead with his claſped hands,—he traverſed the room in agony, redoubling his quickneſs, as new ideas roſe: he paſſed *Arethuſa's* extended form, without emotion; he was wrapt up in deſpair, and inattentive to every thing elſe: he flew in augmented anguiſh from one place to another, he muttered—" my " father! my father!" a hundred times. *Arethuſa* fetched a deep ſigh, and caſt her languid eyes upon him—" *George!* my dear *George!*" ſaid ſhe, faintly endeavouring to raiſe herſelf, but ſhe ſunk back upon the floor: he looked at her for a moment with frowning brows; then reſumed his quick motion over the room, regardleſs of her ſituation or her tears: this was too much for the gentle nature of *Arethuſa*, as he frowned, ſhe uttered an involuntary ſhriek, and relapſed into her former inſenſibility. When ſhe recovered, ſhe found herſelf in the arms of her maid—" Where is my huſband?—

aſked

aſked ſhe, with wildneſs,—"he is out madam, "your ſcream brought me up ſtairs; and he "flew out of the room, as I entered it"—"O! "merciful God!" exclaimed *Arethuſa*, lifting up her blue eyes to heaven, "I could bear any "thing but this!" then ſuddenly recollecting that the ſervant was preſent, ſhe deſired to be left alone, and ſhe was obeyed.—She then gave a looſe to all her unbounded woe, ſhe ſobbed, ſhe wept rivers of the bittereſt tears ſhe had ever ſhed.—"O! *Cecil!*" cried ſhe, claſping her hands over her beating breaſt, "O! "cruel huſband! in what have I offended? "Alas! in conſenting to your wiſhes, did not I "melt by thy tenderneſs? did not I brave *my* "father's anger for you?—O! my reverend "parent, how forcibly do I now feel the juſtice "of your denial!—I have loſt that love for "which I hazarded every thing.—I am the "moſt wretched of beings; for I have made "my *Cecil* miſerable!"—here tenderneſs and ſorrow overcame her; ſhe ſunk upon a ſeat in ſilence, diſſolved in tears. Thus ſhe remained, immerſed in the deepeſt melancholy; the violence of grief was gone— ſhe was calm, but heart-wounded; her boſom heaved the profoundeſt ſighs, and her eyes rained down torrents of tears.—As the gloom of evening advanced, ſhe grew more diſturbed, ſhe ſtarted at every ſound; ſhe caſt frequent and uneaſy glances towards the ſtreet; *George* did not appear.—At laſt a knock came to the door—

Mrs. Cecil

Mrs. Cecil flew to the top of the ſtairs—" Who " is it John?"—ſhe cried, in a faultering, but quick voice—" a gentleman, madam, for my " maſter—I ſaid he was out."—*Arethuſa* flew, diſtracted, into the room, her looks all phrenzy, her ſteps haſty and irreſolute; ſhe wrung her ſnowy hands, in an agony, repeating with the accents of madneſs—" he has deſerted me! he " has! he has indeed"—ſhe ſobbed, and again cried—" I ſhall never ſee him more! Oh! " never never."

In this manner ſhe ſpent the evening, her anguiſh encreaſing, as the night approached—the watchman cried the hour of ten, ſhe was now in a ſtate of mind that could not have been borne much longer, without either turning into madneſs, or ſinking into calm: The knocker once more ſounded—ſhe ſtarted up, and flew acroſs the room; but ſuddenly turning away, ſhe wrung her hands, exclaiming,—" It is not " him—no, he will never return!" As ſhe ſpoke, the door was thrown open, and *Cecil* himſelf appeared—*Arethuſa* gave a ſhriek of joy, and ſpringing forwards, while her waxen arms twined around his neck, cried out, amidſt ſobs, tears, and kiſſes, " Oh, my *George!* do I " ſee you once more! do you ſtill love your " *Arethuſa?* Will you promiſe never to deſert " me again?" *Cecil* had a ſoul of ſenſibility, to behold the woman whom he loved above every other in the world, clinging to his neck, and bedewing his cheek with tears of affection,

melted him into more than uſual fondneſs; he returned her careſſes with fervour and delight, he intreated her forgiveneſs, and when he received it, he was wild with pleaſure. *Mrs. Cecil's* generous heart forgot all his former ſlights, and tenderly accuſed herſelf of injuſtice, as ſhe related the dreadful agonies ſhe had endured. *George* was penetrated by this goodneſs, and endeavoured to ſhow it by ten thouſand little attentions.—"You look ſick, my *Arethuſa*," ſaid he, as ſhe reclined upon his breaſt, her features pallid, and her breathing ſhort and languid; "let me entreat you to take a glaſs of wine?— "you have taſted nothing all day, let me order "ſupper?"—*Mrs. Cecil* was really faint with faſting and diſtreſs: ſhe drank the wine he offered,—ſhe allowed ſupper to be rang for,— "Ah! my deareſt *George*"—cried ſhe, regarding him with a look of fond affection,—"little "did I expect an hour ſince, that I ſhould ever "behold you again, or accept any of your kind- "neſs more"—*Cecil* ſighed,—"I have been "very cruel, but you will forgive me my be- "loved wife; I was not proof againſt the cool "reproaches of my father's letter; I have been "as miſerable as yourſelf, I have been wander- "ing I know not whither."—The delirium of this reconciliation, remained ſtrong for many days: *George* devoted himſelf wholly to *Arethuſa*, who in her turn, endeavoured by the moſt attentive behaviour, to make it of a long, and everlaſting duration, but ſhe was deceived.

Cecil

Cecil had written to his father, the true ſtate of his condition; he had repreſented her, all charming as ſhe was, all virtuous, and the hope that he had entertained of the ſucceſs of this epiſtle, had given him a flow of artificial ſpirits, which enabled him to return *Arethuſa's* tenderneſs with the affection and gratitude of a bliſsful lover.—But when he went to St. James-Square, ſome days after, to enquire for the anſwer to his application, who ſhall deſcribe his emotions? *Sir Arthur* had been in town, and had left orders for his letter to be returned to him unopened. All his airy ſchemes were now vaniſhed. He returned home with the moſt deſpondent air. "It is all over *Arethuſa*," cried he, as he flung himſelf on a ſeat. "I ſhall attempt to ſee my "father no more; he has returned me my let-"ter without a line. All my days of happi-"neſs are gone. Why ſhould I live, I have "nothing to live for now!" He ſtarted up with a look of phrenzy; *Arethuſa* flung herſelf at his feet. "Oh *Cecil!*" cried ſhe, in a voice rendered almoſt unintelligible by ſobs and tears: "There has been a time when *Arethuſa* was "all to you! Is there nothing to live for "when I exiſt? Alas! inhuman huſband, it "is I who ought to hate life; ſince I have "been the cauſe of your abhorring it." *George's* phrenzy ceaſed at the ſound of that voice.

——— "A voice whoſe melting tones could ſtill
The madneſs of revenge from ill."

He raiſed her kindly from his feet, and folding her in his arms for the firſt time in his life, his ſoul diſſolved into feminine ſoftneſs, and he ſhook from his bluſhing cheek ſhowers of relieving tears. *Arethuſa* pardoned his cruelty; ſhe could give allowance to a moment of deſperation. But *George*, as the laſt time, could not wear a cheerfulneſs he felt not within; he ſunk into a corroding melancholy, he heaved the deepeſt ſighs, and often muttered ſentences to himſelf, with an agitation that for the time drew from his eyes a few diſtreſsful drops. He often walked out for many hours alone, to indulge the full force of his woe. He conſtantly ſhunned the ſociety of his former companions, whoſe gaiety would only have increaſed his diſguſt, and perhaps have irritated him into paſſion. He had hitherto been fortunate in his attempts to avoid them; but it was not always to be the caſe.

He ſauntered from home after dinner, about ſeven in the evening, with an intention of wandering in the Green-park. As he was going down the ſtreet he lived in, juſt as he paſſed the door of a famous gaming-houſe, he was ſeized violently by ſome one from it; he turned ſurpriſed: how was it augmented, when he knew the detainer to be *Captain Villiers*. "O! by "Heavens! *Cecil*, I'm glad we've met; I "called the other day, but you were out; "come in here, I have ſomething to ſay to "you." "I cannot ſtay," returned *George*,

"Tell

" Tell me now," " O! by gad! catch me at " that! no, no, come, there's *Davenport* and " *Townſhend*, dam me, there's the whole ban- " ditti of us!" *Villiers* pulled him in vain. *Davenport* appeared. " Let him go, I ſay!" (cried he) " How can you be ſo cruel? you " don't conſider that Madam will be in her " tantrums!" This had a ſure and expected effect upon *Cecil*; he went in, and was uſhered into a room full of gentlemen. He knew them all, and ſoon diſcovered amidſt them the former ſix, that have been mentioned. " Damme " blood what a face you've got!" cried *Windham*, as he entered.—" Confound me, " but its as long as my leg! " Cheer up!" ſaid *Villiers* to his companion. " Don't mind " 'em *Cecil*; they are a pack of dogs all; ſet " on a good face, and ſhew them you are as " briſk as ever." *George* would have been affronted at the raillery of the ſet, had he not known that they gave it to each other as plentifully as to him: He had never been quarrelſome, and particularly at this time, he reſolved not to be ſo; for he was ſtung with pride and their reproaches, which he determined to render ineffectual by appearing as lively as poſſible. He turned upon the officer with an air of pleaſantry. " Now Sir! what have you " to ſay?" " O the devil!" (returned *Villiers*,) " I dont know egad, I believe it was to tell " you, that you had a very pretty Lady." " I " knew that before," replied *Cecil* contemptuouſly.

" ouſly. " Ah ha! Captain, how are you " now? (cried *Beauchamp*, laughing at him,) " *Cecil* has'nt loſt all his ſpirit yet." " Faith! " no" (interrupted *Davenport*,) " he begins to " caſt off his feathers and ſing again. Devil " take me, if I don't ſuſpect he and his, hum, " hi, hum, ha"—(winking cunningly,) " have " have had a quarrel, and they are off." *Cecil* could not be offended, with any appearance of juſtice; *Davenport's* drollery diſarmed him of the power. Indeed there are ſome people who can ſay whatever they like, with impunity. The others now crowded forwards, and *George's* vivacity grew more brilliant every minute, his wit, and *Davenport's* humour, afforded much diverſion. While they were in the midſt of their converſation, *Captain Villiers* (who had been ſo long debarred of his favorite amuſement,) burſt out, demanding to be heard. " Silence! damn ye; ſilence, *Townſhend*, knock " them all down. Silence! Will ye go to " hazard." All was mute in a moment. *Cecil* caught the opportunity. " As you are going " to play gentlemen, I ſhall take my leave, " you know I never was fond of dice!" " Curſe me! if you ſhab off ſo," (roared the Captain.) " This is deviliſh queer! 'Tis " but a little ſilver hazard, dam me." *Daven-* " *port* advanced gravely. " You are a moſt " unthinking fellow *Villiers!* (ſaid he,) *Mr.* " *Cecil* is maſter of a houſehold; and he muſt " look to the main chance. Madam would

" rate

" rate him ſeverely, if he loſt a crown." " Up-
" on my ſoul, *Davenport!*" cried *George*, his eyes flaſhing fire as he flung from him. " You
" are inſupportably inſolent." The good humoured *Davenport* turned on his heel with a whiſtle and laugh. *Cecil* was at the hazard table; fortune ſometimes favoured ſometimes deſerted him; his purſe ſtill was little under its original worth. At laſt the Captain tired of ill-luck, (which not winning rapidly was called) cried out—" Confound me! but this is doing
" nothing! What ſay you *Cecil*; ſhall *we*
" play for gold?"—*George* would have declined it, but a falſe ſhame prevented him: he cloſed eagerly with the propoſal, fatally conſented to it; for before he could tear himſelf from the table, he was ſtripped of eighteen hundred pounds, which he gave his note to pay, as the ſmall ſum he had with him, was too trifling to avail much. He went away ſtupified with deſpair, and entered his own houſe, where he found his wretched wife in the ſtrongeſt fits. She had ſpent the whole evening in agonies not to be deſcribed, and as the clock ſtruck three, her ſenſes forſook her, and ſhe fell into the moſt inveterate convulſions. *George* could not bear to ſee her; and when ſhe was with difficulty brought to herſelf, he ſhrunk from her preſence with horror to his bedchamber. Her maid told her that he was gone to bed indiſpoſed, and that he intreated neither ſhe nor any one, to diſturb him that night, and that were his or-

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ders obeyed, he would tell her the reaſon of his ſtay next morning. *Arethuſa* was ſatisfied, to know that her *Cecil* lived, was all to her, and forgot in the joy of the preſent, the diſtreſſes of his abſence. She ſlept ſweetly upon *her* pillow; but not ſo with *George!* he paſſed the night in a ſtate of mind, little ſhort of diſtraction: he curſed his companions, his fooliſh vanity, and his too eaſy compliance. "Merciful Heaven!" he exclaimed, as he toſſed violently upon his bed,) "I cannot diſcharge my debts: I am "ruined: I have ruined *Arethuſa! Arethuſa!* "Heavenly father! how ſhall I behold her? "I cannot ſee her; I cannot; I am not able to "bear reproaches from one whoſe tenderneſs "is my only comfort! I muſt fly, or I'm un-"done." As he ſpoke, he leaped from the bed, (on which he had thrown himſelf without being undreſſed,) and while his diſtracted brain was whirling with his new planned intention, penned the following haſty billet to his ſlumbering wife.

"Still dear though unfortunate *Arethuſa.*

"I entreat your too often granted forgive-"neſs, for the manner that I now take, to "make you acquainted with the cauſe of my "alarming ſtay laſt night.

"I have not courage ſufficient to hear your "juſt reproaches, or your melting tenderneſs; "or on my knees I would relate my miſery. "I have been betrayed into a gaming-houſe;

" I am ruined, and I muſt fly; I encloſe a " paper, by which the perſon who has a right " to it, will be empowered to receive eighteen " hundred pounds from my next two years al- " lowance from my father: The remainder of " it will be yours; and as to me, I muſt exiſt " in a foreign country, upon heaven's pro- " vidence alone.—If my Father does not " withdraw his bounty from me, I will return, " and ſeek you in that happy retirement, " from whence I took you.—But if ſuch ap- " rent extravagance irritates him more againſt " his unhappy ſon, I will never diſturb your re- " poſe by ſaying, that I exiſt.—When you read " this I will be flying far from the reach of your " dreaded complaints."--*Cecil's* agitation would not permit him to continue; he folded the paper haſtily, and taking ſome guineas from his deſk, left the remainder for *Arethuſa*; then wrapping himſelf in a great coat, and unbarring the ſtreet-door, he bade adieu to the houſe that contained his beloved wife. In the morning, when that faithful partner aroſe, ſhe ſpread the table for breakfaſt; and pouring out a cup of coffee, (of which ſhe knew her huſband was very fond,) went up into his room with an intention of giving it to him in his bed.—Ah! too fond *Arethuſa*, that chamber you are now approaching, does not hold him you ſeek! She entered it ſoftly, and ſetting down the cup upon a table, gently undrew the curtains of his bed,—ſhe ſaw it empty—the firſt idea that

ſtruck

ſtruck her, was terror; but ſuddenly recovering herſelf, ſhe thought it propable, that the ſame buſineſs which had detained him the preceding night, called him out early that day;—" perhaps his father is relenting,"—ſaid ſhe inwardly; as ſhe was leaving the room, ſhe lifted the coffee from the table, her eyes were ſtruck by a folded paper, (that ſhe had not before obſerved,) directed to her, in *George's* hand.—She thought it might be an apology for his going out— ſhe ſeized it, but her hand trembled, and a horrid foreboding of what ſhe was to ſuffer, ſeemed to paſs over her mind.—She opened it, and read it through; her agonies encreaſing as ſhe went on, until the direful concluſion, ſtruck with full force upon her— the paper dropt, and ſhe fell ſenſeleſs to the earth,— her ſervant heard a groan, and the ſound of her body upon the floor; ſhe ran up to her maſter's room, and having rapped unanſwered, at the door, ſhe opened it; and beheld her miſtreſs, as ſhe thought, dead. Her cries called the people of the houſe into the chamber; who uniting their ſeveral efforts, brought her at laſt to herſelf: but it was only to ſink into deeper agonies—ſhe regarded the paper, which ſhe held in her hand, with looks of abhorrence; then ſcreaming, as ſhe graſped it, was thrown into violent hyſterics.—" My Huſband! *Cecil!* " my Huſband!"— was all that ſhe could articulate, and that with a voice of ſuch piercing ſorrow, that it thrilled through every heart. The whole

whole ſcene was a maze of wonder, both to the maid, and to the ſurrounding people: all they could collect, was from *Mrs. Cecil's* ſudden and frantic exclamations, which led them to ſome part of the truth, as they ſuppoſed, her ſorrow was occaſioned by the letter which ſhe held in her hand, and by the departure of her huſband, who, the ſervant knew, as he was not in his own room, was out of the houſe. The violent exertions of *Arethuſa's* anguiſh weakened her body ſo much, that nature was not able to bear it any longer, and by degrees the tempeſt died away into a calm deſpair—ſhe ſighed heavily, and ſhed ſome tears—ſhe was regardleſs of every ones queſtion; and when their importunity became preſſing, ſhe only looked at her maid, and ſaid, "I wiſh I was alone." The people withdrew; and *Lucy* leading her miſtreſs into the drawing-room, at her deſire quitted her alſo. *Mrs. Cecil* remained ſtupified with ſorrow: ſhe ſat down in ſilence upon a ſopha; regarding the letter which ſhe ſtill held with a dumb deſpair. An hour had paſſed away in this ſituation, when her footman opening the door, introduced *Captain Villiers*: he made many apologies for his intruſion at ſo early an hour; adding it was indiſpenſible buſineſs with *Mr. Cecil* which had forced him to it. *Arethuſa* told him, he was not at home; but entreated to be made acquainted with the purport of what he came upon—"O! Madam, (returned *Villiers*), its of no vaſt conſequence—nothing but

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an affair of—damme, its only a play debt!"—And are *you* the Gentleman? exclaimed *Mrs. Cecil*, regarding him with an air of furious animoſity—"Are *you* he, to whom I am to deliver "this paper from my huſband?"—The officer received it, and careleſsly running his eye over it, wrapped it up with an air of indifference, ſaying, "yes, yes, madam, this is very right.—"Give my compliments to *Mr. Cecil*, and tell "him I ſhall be glad to ſee him in Pall-mall—"I wiſh you good morning"—he roſe, made his bow, and left the room. *Mrs. Cecil's* violent grief, was again rouſed by this interview; and in the firſt tranſports of it, ſhe reſolved to follow her unfortunate *George* wherever he was gone:—but the difficulty of finding out the place of his deſtination, ſomewhat ſtartled her; ſhe read his heart-rending letter once more—"*A foreign country!* (ſaid ſhe) Is it to France? "to Italy?—to Spain?—Spain! have I not "heard him mention Spain?"—She now recollected, that *Cecil* whoſe mother was a Spaniard,) had often mentioned a *Donna Vencia Scifuenza*, a maiden aunt, who reſided in a caſtle upon the banks of the Tagus: to her it was moſt probable, he was gone. He had no connections with either of the other countries; and without connections, he could never hope to exiſt.—*Mrs. Cecil* having determined to ſet out in ſearch of him there; now ſent for a jeweller, and diſpoſed of the trinkets ſhe poſſeſſed; ſome of which had been her Mother's, and ſome the gift

gift of her huſband; the hopes of overtaking her *George*, inſpired *Mrs. Cecil* with ſuch pleaſure, that ſhe forwarded every thing with the greateſt alacrity; ſhe paid for a month's lodging which was due; and civily informed the woman, ſhe could ſtay in it no longer; ſhe diſcharged a few trifling debts in the neighbourhood, together with her man-ſervant and cook, whoſe wages *Mr. Cecil* had paid, before the unfortunate affair of the gaming-houſe. *Arethuſa* had yet three days of her month to remain in St. James's-Street; in this period ſhe was to form ſome ſecure method of following her huſband: there was nothing that could ſo propably protect her from inſult, as the habit of a man; but the idea was ſo repugnant to a woman, that her delicacy at firſt, ſhrunk from it; but upon mature deliberation, ſhe found it would really be the beſt means of expediting and ſecuring her on her journey, ſo ſhe reſolved to adopt it. The next thing to be conſidered, was an excuſe for her parents, otherwiſe their letters never being anſwered, would create in them great uneaſineſs: having determined upon what ſhe ſhould ſay; ſhe wrote the following epiſtle to her father.

" My dear father!

" An unavoidable, but not unplea-
" ſant neceſſity, calls my huſband and myſelf to
" Spain: I am now in the greateſt hurry, pre-
" paring

" paring for our departure; and have only time
" to beg you not to write to me, until we in-
" form you, that we are arrived at our place of
" deſtination; elſe the uncertain direction of
" your letters, would prevent them from reach-
" ing us, and make you uneaſy for our ſafety,
" I can add no more, but my ſincere love to my
" brother; my dutiful affection to my mother
" and yourſelf, in which my beloved *Cecil* ar-
" dently joins with your affectionate child.

Arethuſa Cecil."

The maid was called up, and ſent with this to the poſt-office. When ſhe returned, *Mrs. Cecil* rang for her a ſecond time.—"*Lucy!*" ſaid ſhe, as the girl came in—" I have ſomething " to ſay to you; come here"—ſhe approached, dropping a low curteſy—" I believe (ſaid *Are-* " *thuſa*,) that I can have a dependance upon " your ſecrecy, if, even the propoſal I am about " to make, does not correſpond with your wiſh-" es;"—" I ſure ye mam, (interrupted the ſer-" vant, with a ſignificant ſmile,) I've been en-" truſted with many a ſecret, that never paſſed " my lips as I'm a ſinner—and why may'nt I " keep yours, as well as anothers?"—" Very " well! (returned *Mrs. Cecil*,) I make no doubt " you are diſcreet.—My huſband is gone " abroad"—" abroad! ma'm! (cried the maid,) " Lord have mercy! not among the French, " and the *Gulloteens*, I hope?"—" no, no, re-

" plied

" plied *Arethuſa*,) he is in Spain—he was ſent " for ſo ſuddenly, that he had not time to take " me with him; therefore he left me a letter, " deſiring me to diſcharge all my debts, and " follow him.—But the manner in which he " has ordered me to follow him, *Lucy*,— *that* " threw me into ſuch agonies; would you think " it? he deſired I would bring you with me,and " come both of us in men's cloaths"—" In " men's cloaths!" exclaimed the girl, lifting " up her hands and eyes,—yes *Lucy*! he ſaid " ſo, (continued *Arethuſa*,) my modeſty, my " ſhame, at ſuch an idea, was reaſon ſufficient " to make me ſo ill"—" O! Lord! yes ma'm" returned the maid"—" But then,(replied *Mrs.* " *Cecil*), he ſaid it would preſerve me from " being inſulted by ſailors, as a helpleſs woman, " and indeed I now begin to think it would." " Why indeed, ſo do I ma'm, (rejoined *Lucy*,) " you know nobody could tell who we were, " I don't ſee why we ſhould'nt go ſo, not I."— " Then you will go with me *Lucy?*"— O! " Lard, yes ma'm, I will indeed for all its ſo im- " modeſt."—The reſult of this converſation was an agreement, that *Lucy* ſhould procure a ſuit of cloaths for herſelf and miſtreſs, at ſome ſhop of ready made things. *Mrs. Cecil* choſe the habit of a Midſhipman; as ſuiting better with her delicacy: and the maid was ordered to bring a pair of trowſers, and a blue jacket, for her to try on; *Lucy* repaired to a taylor, of whom, by depoſiting their value, ſhe procured

ſeveral

ſeveral ſuits of cloaths, which ſhe ſaid were for a young gentleman, that being out of his ſenſes was not harmleſs enough to be meaſured by a ſtrange man. *Mrs. Cecil* who had no intention of ſhewing the beauty of *her* form, was ſoon pleaſed; but *Lucy* was not ſo ſucceſsful, ſhe returned to and from the taylor's, half a dozen times before ſhe was ſettled to her mind: at length ſhe fixed on a ſpotted coat, a worked waiſtcoat, and a pair of tight pantaloons—giving this reaſon for wearing the latter,—" I " was always allowed to have a genteel leg, " and I don't want to hide it now, I aſſure you" *Arethuſa* ſaw it was in vain to contend with her maid's vanity; who ſtared at her miſtreſs, when ſhe ſaw her adding bulk to her body by a number of waiſtcoats; whilſt ſhe herſelf was tightening her's like a pair of ſtays. Theſe matters being adjuſted; their boxes were packed up, both were equipped, and carefully concealing themſelves from the ſight of any one, they leaped into a hackney coach, and were driven to an Inn, where they were to wait for the ſetting out of the Falmouth coach; at which place, *Mrs. Cecil* determined to take ſhipping for Liſbon; intending to travel by land to the caſtle of *Donna Vencia.*— *Arethuſa* aſſumed her mother's maiden name, and gave *Lucy* orders for the future to call her *Mr. Frederick Owen*; who begged permiſſion to chuſe *her* title herſelf, which ſhe wiſhed might be *Timothy*; as ſhe once had an unfortunate ſweetheart of that name. After

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the uſual time of travelling, they arrived at Falmouth; where, to *Mrs. Cecil's* great joy, they found the packet juſt on the eve of departure. As the cabin was not near full, they eaſily were received amongſt the paſſengers; the number of which only amounted to five, namely an old gentleman, a young one, and three ladies. *Arethuſa* entered the cabin with great confuſion: ſhe thought every one muſt ſee through her diſguiſe, and diſcover her to be a woman; the young man regarded her with an air of contempt; the three ladies, with compaſſion for her apparent youth; the old gentleman was not there, he was indiſpoſed, and in bed —*Lucy*, to whom we muſt now give the name of *Timothy*, was mean while enjoying different ſenſations; ſhe was ſtrutting about the deck amongſt the ſailors, with an air of triumph, unbuttoning her waiſtcoat to diſplay her fine frill, and white neck; throwing out her legs; in ſhort, playing the tricks of a monkey; even in the habit of a man, ſhe hoped to inſpire ſome of the tars with admiration, but in fact, ſhe defeated her intent. One laughed; another winked; a third whiſpered, "ſmoke the puppy!"—then another ran againſt her, with out-ſtretched tarry hands; another wrote "fop" upon her back, with chalk; In fact, they all united in cruel combination againſt this unhappy male-female coquet.—The ſhip was now underweigh; the ſails unfurled, ſwelled in the proſperous gale; the joyful ſhout of the mariners; the crouding

waves, which foamed round the ſides of the veſſel as ſhe cut them with ſwift keel; was all new to *Arethuſa*, and inſpired her depreſſed ſoul with a momentary pleaſure. Towards the evening, when every perſon was upon the deck, *Mrs. Cecil*, who was ſitting alone in the cabin, was ſurprized by the unexpected appearance of an elderly gentleman, who, ſhe juſtly ſuppoſed was he that had been indiſpoſed; he was tall, a good perſon, and ſeemed about the age of fifty three or four: he wore his own hair, which was thin upon his temples, ſomewhat adding to the height of his forehead; his noſe was prominent, his eyes piercing, but his complexion pallid, as if through diſtreſs: *Arethuſa* was ſtruck by his air, with a ſort of veneration and regard; ſhe aroſe reſpectfully as he entered, and endeavoured to make a bow; the gentleman returned her ſalute, and advancing towards her, ſaid,—" this pleaſure, my young ſir, was quite " unexpected,—I did not know that the packet " had other paſſengers, than thoſe I ſaw when " I firſt entered it."—" I have not been long " in the veſſel, ſir,"—returned *Arethuſa*, in a timid low voice; the gentleman ſat down,—" pray ſir! may I requeſt the favour of your " name?"—" *Owen*," replied *Mrs. Cecil*,—" *Owen!* (echoed the ſtranger,) are you of the " welſh family of that name?--" yes ſir," returned *Arethuſa*,—" my name (ſaid the gentle- " man,) is *Arthur*—pray *Mr. Owen* do you " make Liſbon your reſidence? I hope you do

" not go like myſelf, as an invalid?—" no ſir" replied *Mrs. Cecil*, drawing an involuntary ſigh " I am going to ſome relations that reſide in " Spain,"—" I perceive that you are in the " navy"—ſaid *Mr. Arthur* regarding her blue jacket,—" methinks you are a very young " ſailor,"—*Arethuſa* was ſilent, the gentleman was about to aſk, to what ſhip ſhe belonged; but *Mrs. Cecil* obſerving that he was going to make ſome other enquiry, ſtopped him, by ſaying,—" you mentioned that you are an in- " valid ſir; you look ſo, but I hope the air of " Liſbon will have power to reſtore you"—" I " am indifferent about it"—returned the ſtranger, ſighing deeply,—" It is a duty upon every " man to preſerve his life, by all honeſt means, " as it is poſſible, that life may be of ſervice to " ſome fellow being, whether he values it " himſelf or not; but if his endeavours to pre- " ſerve it are fruitleſs, ſurely he is not blame- " able, if he ſecretly rejoices to be rid of an " exiſtence that is a burthen to him!"— *Mrs. Cecil*, did not clearly comprehend the purport of this ſpeech; it appeared to allude to ſome circumſtances of his own life; and to be addreſſed more to himſelf, than to her—" exiſtence is a " burthen to many!"— rejoined *Arethuſa*, while a tear to her luckleſs fortunes, glittered in her eye: *Mr. Arthur* remarked it with emotion; and he humanely endeavoured to diſpell the remembrance of woes, he was afraid he had awakened—" you are a young mora- " liſt,"

liſt," replied he, aſſuming an air of gaiety, "though you aſſent to my opinion, I dare ſay, "you inwardly wonder at a man's being weary "of life,—but come,—I am not ſo much an "invalid, nor ſo old, but I can be a pretty "agreeable companion to a young man—I "can ſhare in all the amuſements that would "pleaſe you,—are you fond of cheſs?—I have "a cheſs-board with me, and it may afford "you ſome pleaſure:"—*Mrs. Cecil* had often been an opponent to her huſband in that game, and had acquired by that means, a ſufficient proficiency to make it agreeable to herſelf: ſhe accepted the invitation of *Mr. Arthur*, but it was rather with a deſign to gratify him, than amuſe herſelf; *Mr. Arthur* was pleaſed with the facility with which ſhe complied; a facility that appeared intended as a compliment to him.

In the midſt of the game, the old gentleman was taken with a ſudden giddineſs, and ſick head-ache, to which he was ſubject; which obliged him to ceaſe the game: *Arethuſa* no ſooner obſerved him turn pale, and quit the cheſs-men, than ſhe ſtarted up, and flew to him as he was quitting the cabin for his own apartment, and tenderly offering him her arm, preſſed him ſo warmly to return, and accept of her ſervices to recover hlm, that he yielded to her importunities, and was lead by her to a ſeat; *Mrs. Cecil* in an inſtant brought him a ſlice of lemon, and a ſmelling bottle; the one diſpelled

led his ſickneſs, the other helped to relieve his head-ache. *Mr. Arthur*, as he came to himſelf, was ſenſibly touched by theſe attentions; he thanked *Arethuſa* with gratitude; at the ſame time, expreſſing his aſtoniſhment at the diſpatch with which ſhe had given him relief; "I was bred up under the care of a maiden "aunt," ſaid *Arethuſa*, replying to his enquiries,—"From her, I learnt theſe ſimple, but uſeful remedies: I alſo was taught to com- "paſſionate complaints which from my youth "I am not afflicted with; and to render every "ſervice that lay in my power, to thoſe who "needed them."—"Your aunt muſt have been "a good woman," returned *Mr. Arthur*, drawing a heavy ſigh; "and fortunate in being bleſt "with ſo dutiful a nephew!"—the other paſſengers entering at that moment, put a period to a converſation that was pleaſing to both.—The ladies were young and handſome; but their beauty extracted no attentions, but thoſe of common politeneſs, from *Arethuſa*: She was particularly intereſted in *Mr. Arthur*, and to him all her looks were directed; ſhe watched all his motions, all his wiſhes; at every inſtant ſhe was ready to fly, and reach him whatever he wanted; in ſhort ſhe acted as if he had been her father. During the courſe of the voyage, *Mr. Arthur's* diſorder often attacked him; and from the kind, affectionate behaviour of *Mrs. Cecil*, he always was ſure of a relief.

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An incident happened one day, which ſhewed him the full extent of her regard for him.

The old gentleman had been walking upon the deck to enjoy the morning air, with one of the young ladies; the deck being juſt waſhed the foot of his female companion ſlipped, ſhe fell down, he flew to aſſiſt her; but being ſeized with his giddineſs, he reeled, and was upon the point of falling alſo, had not *Arethuſa* who was reading at the ſtern, heard his voice: there needed no more to alarm her, ſhe ſprang forwards, and ſaved him in her arms; the lady was aſſiſted by a ſailor, and not having received any hurt, all was well. *Mr. Arthur* and his young friend retired to the cabin: *Mrs. Cecil* mulled him a little wine, and tenderly preſſed him to take it; the old gentleman received it, ſaying, with a ſmile,—" you ſhould do this " for the lady, not for an old man like me,— " if a young lady paid me ſuch attention as you " do, perhaps I might grow fooliſh, and make " love to her!" *Arethuſa* bluſhed involuntarily, *Mr. Arthur* continued—" you are a ſtrange " youth *Mr. Owen* to be ſo gallant to your own " ſex, and ſo inattentive to the other!"—"The " lady, was young, and in health ſir, (returned " *Arethuſa*,) the fall could do her little or no " prejudice; but to you who are both an in- " valid, and advanced in years, ſuch a ſtumble " might have been attended with the worſt " conſequences."—*Mr. Arthur* looked at her with admiration; *Arethuſa's* mild eyes, ſunk unde

under his, with ſweet confuſion.—" What is " your chriſtian name?"—aſked he,—" *Fre-* " *derick* ſir."—" *Frederick!* how I ſhould " glory in ſuch a ſon!"—*Mr. Arthur* mutter-ed ſomething to himſelf, and wiped a tear from his cheek with a haſty hand;—" *Frederick!*" reſumed he, tenderly laying his arm over hers, " will you deem me impertinent if I aſk " you candidly, to give me a recital of your " life? there appears, ſomething to me in it, " extraordinary, even ſhort as it has been: I " may be of ſervice to you; I have great things " in my power, but far greater in my will."— " Your goodneſs diſtreſſes me, dear ſir!"—re-turned *Mrs. Cecil*, timidly raiſing her blue, and expreſſive eyes;—" you have gueſſed right: " *my* life *has* been a ſad and a varied one, " but it is not now in my power, to give you " a recital of it,—I cannot even tell you more " relating to my birth.—But at ſome future " period; if heaven ordains it ſo, when the " criſis of my fate, is happily over, I will lay " open my whole ſoul to your view,—if not " I will ſink into my grave, a victim to an ill-" ſtarred though returned affection,— a grave! " in a foreign country, far from my home, my " friends, my parents!"— here, her emoti-ons became too violent to proceed, and fearful of betraying herſelf to *Mr. Arthur*, ſhe left the cabin with precipitation.

At length the mariners deſcried the wiſhed-for port; and a ſhort time brought them ſafely into

into it. It was evening when they arrived, and as *Mr. Arthur* thought it better to remain in the veſſel until the next morning, *Arethuſa* determined not to deſert him, but to continue the few ſucceeding hours with him, who promiſed, before he parted from her; to give her a direction, by which any letters might reach him.

Lucy more impatient of ſeeing the city than her miſtreſs, ſallied out with one of the ſailors, to gratify herſelf with a view of it. As they were parading together, through ſome of the principal ſtreets, the maid beheld *Mr. Cecil* himſelf, approaching her—She flew towards him, and cried out in a joyful voice—"O Lord, Sir! "who expected to ſee you! whereabouts do "you live? You ſee we're come after you!" George, to whom all this was Hebrew, proceeding from the mouth of an unknown young man; aſked her what ſhe meant? *Lucy* laughed aloud, and as ſhe ſaw he did not comprehend her, reſolved to let him remain ſo. "O! "bleſs me, (cried ſhe,) dont you know me? "Well, it's to be hoped, you know who I "ſerve! I ſuppoſe you have quite forgot a *Mr.* "*Frederick Owen?* Well, well, never mind, "give us your direction, and my maſter ſhall "call upon you." *Cecil*, careleſs who her maſter was, put a card into her hand, and left her, before ſhe could utter another ſyllable.

Lucy, conſcious of the pleaſure this intelligence would afford her miſtreſs; hurried back with

with the ſailor, to the ſhip; and flying into the cabin, where ſat *Mr. Arthur* and *Arethuſa*, cried out " ma'm! ma'm! I've ſeen my maſter, *Mr. Cecil*, ma'm!" *Mrs. Cecil* ſtarted up, and ſinking upon her knees, exclaimed " merciful " God!" then ſunk ſenſeleſs upon the floor; It was *Mr. Arthur* now, that was the phyſician; he applied reſtoratives to *Arethuſa*, until ſhe recovered, as ſhe opened her eyes, he caught her hand, and gazing at her with earneſtneſs, cried out,—" for God's ſake madam! " tell me the meaning of thoſe words! tell me " who is *Mr. Cecil?* you know not how much " I am intereſted in that name." *Mrs. Cecil* conſcious that to diſguiſe her ſex was now impoſſible, bade *Lucy* retire, and in as brief, and clear a manner, as her confuſion and agitation would permit, related to *Mr. Arthur* every incident of her life.

During the latter part of her relation, his emotions were violent, and the tears courſed quickly over his cheeks, when ſhe had finiſhed, he claſped his hands together, and exclaimed in a voice of agony,—" O! my ſon! my dear " ſon! is it poſſible, that *I* have been the bar- " barian to ſeparate you from ſuch an angel!— " and has my inexorable cruelty, deareſt creature, brought *you* to ſo much miſery?—ſee be- " fore you, that father, that cruel father, you " complain of! *Sir. Arthur Cecil*,"—*Arethuſa* looked at him, motionleſs with ſurprize, and ſpeechleſs,—he approached her, and claſped her

in his arms; again exclaimed—" let me fold " you to my breaſt, beſt, moſt virtuous of wo- " men? little did I think, that in him I wiſhed " a *ſon*, I ſaw a *daughter!*"—*Arethuſa* melted into tears of rapture: ſhe returned his embrace with the ſame warmth ſhe would have done that of her father. At length riſing from his boſom, ſhe ſaid,"—"ah ſir! ſuffer me to ſend my maid to my beloved wanderer? do not rob him of one joyful moment!"—*Sir Arthur* ordered *Lucy* to ſend one of the ſeamen to *Mr. Cecil*, deſiring his immediate attendance upon a gentleman in the veſſel. The orders being obeyed, in a ſhort ſpace of time, *Lucy* informed *Sir Arthur*, and her miſtreſs, who were retired to the inner room, that *Mr. Cecil* was come.—What a moment was this, for both! they were going to behold, the one a much loved huſband, the other an equally beloved ſon. *Sir Arthur* entered the cabin, leading *Arethuſa* (in her male habit,) in his hand. *George* knew her features directly—he flew forwards, but the ſurprize of his wife and his father together overcame him, and he fainted at their feet.—*Mrs. Cecil* was diſtracted—he recovered, and found himſelf in the arms of his parent, and his *Arethuſa*—he looked up, and could only kiſs both their hands in ſilence.—In proportion as his agitation abated, he recovered his ſtrength and ſpeech, and enquiring about their meeting, heard *Arethuſa's* narrative, and his father's. " My health was declining; (ſaid the latter,) and

" and as your mother's ſiſter had died, and de-
" clared me her heir by will; I thought to
" come, and ſpend a few month's at Liſbon to
" recover my health, and ſettle the buſineſs of
" the eſtates left to me. I aſſumed the name
" of *Arthur*, with no other intention than that
" of avoiding the parade of ſervants; which
" I muſt have inevitably been peſtered with,
" had I been known as a Baronet. Heaven
" prompted me to the journey; and to Heaven
" I return my thanks."—*Mr. Cecil* in his turn informed them, that "he took ſhipping for
" Spain, and arriving at *Donna Vencia's* caſtle, he
" found that ſhe had been deceaſed ſome time,
"and, that as he had then, no particular place of
" deſtination, he took the route to Liſbon, and
" had been in that city, about a fortnight."—*Sir Arthur*, whoſe health had been only affected by the indiſcretion of his ſon; refuſed to remain in Portugal; but after empowering a merchant to ſettle his affairs at Scifuenza caſtle; he retook his paſſage to England, with his new found children, impatient to ſee and make happy the family of the *Sydney's*. The packet, after a ſhort paſſage, reached Falmouth, from whence they went immediately towards *Abby-grange*, where *Mr.* and *Mrs. Sydney* had the rapturous pleaſure, of folding to their hearts, *Cecil* and his *Arethuſa*.

FINIS.